

THE WIRE

EVERY MONTH
BUT NEVER TWO MUSIC

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HENDERSON**

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wave over wave
an ear-full and how

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(S'Express inset: Dominic Turner).

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NOW'S THE TIME *presents* THE NEWS SECTION

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PURDEY'S

clair vitar

MORE RHYTHM LESS BILES



• **AS EVER**, at this year's North Sea Jazz Festival in The Hague (July 10-12), 1,000 jazz musicians will perform on 13 stages continuously and simultaneously for 8 hours a day. Special themes this year include Jazz Ladies (Roberta Flack, Dianne Reeves, Betty Carter...), the Hammond Organ Explosion (Jimmy Smith, Jimmy McGriff, Barbara Dennerlein...), Fusion & Jazz Rock (Grover Washington Jr, Brecker Brothers, Bill Evans...) and so the list goes on. Call 010 31 070 20 34 for further details.

• **GETTING INTO** the global spirit of things, a group of contemporary artists and musicians from Britain will this month be collaborating with their Canadian counterparts for the Cultural Olympics. The *Crosser* project will enable the artists to explore new processes of combining music and visual art. The results will be performed at La Seu D'Urgell and Wingfield College, Suffolk. For further details on the project's progress contact Carla Brown on 071 511 6125.

BIRMINGHAM, ILLINOIS

• **ILLINOIS JACQUET** makes his only UK appearance at the Birmingham International Jazz Festival in July. Joining Illinois at the Festival (3-12) will be Roy Ayers, Lonnie Liston Smith, Rickie Lee Jones, and many more famous (and not so famous) names. Spread across various venues throughout the city, details of the festival can be obtained from the Big Bear Music Group on 021 454 7020.



Cap and Jacquet

CAROLINA BENSHAMESH

• **AFRICAN SUPER-STAR** Youssou N'Dour plays two dates at London's Town and Country Club (June 26th and 27th) and one at Newcastle's Riverside (June 30th) to coincide with the release of his new album *Eyes Open* on Spike Lee's 40 Acres And A Mule label through Columbia.

• **AN OPEN-air performance**, on 14 July, of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Sternklang* — where five separate groups of amplified singers/players will be located in different places — will allow the audience to choose where in Cannon Hill Park they can best experience the music! The project is free and open to all.

• **RADIO THREE** news. After a rude interruption by the cricket, John Surman's series on the development of jazz in the Scandinavian countries is back on air: *Nordic Syncretism* starts-up again on July 10th at 6.30pm. Long-standing *Wire* contributor writer Brian Morton introduces a couple of jazz gems this month, the David Murray Quartet (10pm on July 20th), and Nana Vasconcelos at the same time on July 27th. Paul Oliver's award-winning series, in which he looks at the origins of black American blues, continues on Thursdays, 11pm.

• **ONE OF** North London's most forward-thinking improv clubs, Jazz Rumours, is holding a mini Festival this month, featuring several major players currently performing on the scene, including Elton Dean, Harry Beckett, Evan Parker and Louis Moholo. To obtain tickets for the 2-day event (July 17th/18th), ring 081 254 6198.

• **A CELEBRATION** of World Music takes place at the Barbican on Monday July 6th. With school pupils from East Sussex, international musicians from Senegal, North India and Japan, and the London Sinfonietta performing works inspired by non-Western musical traditions, *The Big Event* is the culmination of a year-long research project which aims to deepen the understanding of music from a variety of cultures. Tickets at £2 for teachers and pupils are available from the London Sinfonietta (081 549 5747) and £5 for individuals from the Barbican Box Office (071 638 8891).

• **A TRIBUTE** to Miles Davis is sure to be one of the highlights at this year's Glasgow Jazz Festival. You can hear the remaining members of his legendary 60s quintet – Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter and Tony Williams – with young trumpeter Wallace Rodney at Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall on Saturday 11th July. Other artists appearing this year include Carla Bley, Don Cherry, Jim Mullen, Grover Washington and McCoy Tyner. See *In Town Tonight* for details and dates. For tickets call 041 227 5511.

• **THE AMERICAN** Music Festival hits London this month with Adeva and Boogie Down Productions featuring KRS-1 at the Brixton Academy 2nd. Buddy Guy & Hammond-hounds Smith and McGriff plus Emmylou Harris all play the Crystal Bowl on the 4th and 5th. And details of many more acts from over the ocean can be obtained by ringing 071 413 1445.

• **TO EXPERIENCE** the music, song, dance, crafts, costume and cuisines of the Caribbean, come to sunny... Twickenham. 1992's Music Village Festival, hosted there, aims to reflect the rich diversity and cultural variety of the islands from the 400 years of colonisation and its aftermath. The event promises startling examples of the creative union of traditional and imported styles. Set in Orleans House, Twickenham, Middlesex from the 8th-11th of July, tickets are priced at £7/4.50 adults and £2 children. For further information call 081 940 0057.

BRAZIL ALL OVER

• **MORE MULTI-nationalism**, in keeping with the flavour of this month's news, Brazilian vocalist Marisa Monte returns to the UK for a one-off date at London's Festival Hall. Her latest album, *Mai*, includes contributions from artists not to date associated with the music of Brazil – John Zorn, Marc Ribot and Ryuichi Sakamoto. The concert promises to be hot and heavy – just like the weather! (*If it doesn't rain* – Ed.)



Marisa Monte

• **WYNTON MARSALIS**, Ray Charles, BB King and Gerry Mulligan are just some of the artists playing in the JVC Capital Radio Jazz Parade at the South Bank in July. To contact the Music Festival Hotline, call 071 379 1066.

• **SAVE THE** Sound Systems is the collective title for a series of Sunday night gigs at London's Bass Clef to raise money to replace the club's recently stolen PA system. For details of the jazz, Latin and African beats you can expect to hear, see *In Town Tonight*.

• **6,500 YOUNG** performers are taking part in Europe's largest music festival this month. The 1992 National Festival for Music For Youth comes in the wake of fierce public debate over the future and nature of music in Britain's schools. Organised by the charity Music for Youth, it is intended that the event will highlight the benefits to be gained from early and continuing involvement in the arts for children. Tickets are available from the Royal Festival Hall Box Office on 071 928 8800.

• **THE POP Video** – marketing ploy or contemporary form? Decide for yourself at the world's first exhibition devoted entirely to the story of the pop video at the MOMI. Accompanying the text panels and video booths will be a giant wall screening a compilation of the top 100 pop promos ever made. Prized memorabilia from video stars will sit alongside rare, working exhibits including a 1930s Pan-O-Ram "Soundies" film jukebox. Entertaining but also educational, the exhibition will also look at the pre-history of the pop promo and trace the technological advancements in the industry. The exhibition opens on July 25th. Advance booking available (071 928 3535).

• **JOHN MCGLENN** conducts the London Sinfonietta in a celebration of the American Musical, in particular the work of Cole Porter, on Sunday July 19th. As well as extracts from *Anything Goes*, the programme will include songs from *DeBussy Was A Lady* and *Something For The Boys*.

NOW'S THE TIME

• **COMPANY WEEK** takes place from the 21st to 25th July at The Place Theatre, 17 Duke's Road, London WC1. Musicians at the annual festival of improvised music – celebrated and influential worldwide – are Tony Oxley, Reggie Workman, Jin-Hi Kim, John Butcher, Matt Wand, David Shea, Orin Marshall and Paul Haines, as well as founder-organiser Derek Bailey. For further details contact Incus on 081 986 6904.

• **AT LAST!** After constant request, we are able to bring you The Wire Index, the definitive guide to the first 100 issues. Listing all features, interviews, obituaries, major book reviews and of course *Soundcheck*, the Index is a must for any serious music fan, for tracking down essential back-issues, or just for an understanding of how music's progressed through the decade. See page 53 for further details.

• **THE ANC'S** 80th Anniversary Celebration – in association with Kiss FM – takes place on June 28th at the Brixton Academy. Guest of honour will be Deputy ANC President Walter Sisulu, who also celebrates his 80th year! Headlining the musical bill and interrupting her European tour especially for this occasion will be Tracy Chapman, whose acoustic sets at the Mandela concert brought her worldwide acclaim. Other big-name artists appearing include Rebel MC, The Ragga Twins, Alison Limerick and Benjamin Zephaniah. There will also be a strong music presence from South Africa, with Joe Mogotsi & The Manhattan Brothers, Sonti Mdelbele and Zila. Tickets at £12.50 available from the Academy Box Office on 071 326 1022 and usual agents.

in town **TONIGHT**

Our choice of July's jazz gigs

ABERDEEN *The Lemon Tree* (0224 642 230): Clark Tracey Qt (7).
BIRMINGHAM *MAC* (021 440 4221): Django Bates' Delightful Precipice (10); Dave O'Higgins Qt, Julian Joseph Qt (11); Arturo Sandoval/Como No Project (30).
BLACKPOOL *Empress Ballrooms* (0253 27786): Grover Washington (9); Mari Wilson/Roy Ayers (12); BB King (14); Ray Charles (15); Roberta Flack (16); Cab Calloway (17); Nina Simone (19).
BRACKNELL *South Hill Park* (0344 484 123): Mervyn Africa @ The Bracknell Festival (3–5).
BRENTWOOD *Leisure Centre* (0277 262 616): Courtney Pine (4).
CAMBRIDGE *Cherry Hinton Hall* (0223 463 347): Buddy Guy (Aug 1).
CHELTHAM *Pirville Pump Room* (0242 523 690): Joanna MacGregor (8); *Town Hall*. Andy Sheppard In Co-Motion (17).
CUMBRIA *Appleby Castle* (0768 352 613): Evan Parker, Stan Tracey Qt (10); Tina May Qt, Sean Tracey/Evan Parker Duo, Don Weller Qt, Alan Skidmore Qt (11).
**Paisley Arts Centre (041 887 1010): Clark Tracey Qt (5).
GLASGOW *Royal Concert Hall* (041 227 5511): The Count Basie Orchestra with Martin Taylor (2); Carol Kidd (4); Nina Simone (5); Tony Bennett (10); McCoy Tyner Big Band (6); Grover Washington (7); A Tribute to Miles Davis featuring Herbie Hancock & Wayne Shorter (11).
Tramway (041 227 5511): Bheki Mseleku (2); Paul Motian Trio (3); Phil Woods Qt (4); Carla Bley featuring**

Andy Sheppard (5); Robben Ford Trio (8); Carla Bley featuring Alex Balanescu (9); Don Cherry Qt (10). *Late night club @ Tramway*: Tommy Smith (2); Inekere (3/4); Yellowjackets (9); Jim Mullen Qt (10); Jimmy Smith/Jimmy McGriff (11).
LEICESTER *Phoenix Arts Centre* (0533 554 854): Julian Argüelles Qt (25).
LIVERPOOL *Floral Pavillion Theatre* (051 639 4360): Jimmy Smith & Jimmy McGriff, Robben Ford (10).
PORTSMOUTH *Port Solent Stage* (0705 834 182): Barney Kessel (18); Tommy Chase (26).
ST. ALBANS *MAC* (0727 44222): Martin Taylor/Gordon Giltrap (18).
WIGAN *Mill At The Pier* (0942 823 666): Louie Bellson & His All Star American Big Band (14); Maynard Ferguson's Big Bog Nouveau (15); Arizona Big Band (16).
WORKING *Pavillion Theatre* (0903 820 500): Courtney Pine (5).
YORK *Arts Centre* (0904 627 129): The Ben Crossland Qt (15).

in & around **LONDON**

BRIXTON ACADEMY (071 413 1445): Boogie Down Productions featuring KRS1 with Adeva (2).
CRYSTAL PALACE BOWL (071 413 1445): Buddy Guy, John Hammond, The Mose Allison Trio, Jimmy Smith & Jimmy McGriff (4).
HAMMERSMITH ODEON (071 741 4868): Karie & Anna McGarrigle (June 30).
HAMMERSMITH PALAIS (071 413 1445): Celia Cruz & Tito Puente (5).
ICA – PLATFORM 2 (071 930 0493): Paul Ruders, Joanna MacGregor & Rolf Hind (June 30); Ixion Ensemble (1); Hugh

Webb, Rolf Hind (2); New Music Marathon (3); Hit It – The Percussion Event with Thebe Lipen & Louis Moholo (4); Icebreaker (5).
JACKSONS LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE (081 341 4421): Maluju (18).
JAZZ CAFE NW1 (071 284 4358): Arrested Development (1/2); Bheki Mseleku & His Superband (4); Vinx (6/7); Vince Jones (10/11); Jean Paul Bourelly (16/17); Ruby Turner (24/25).
JAZZ RUMOURS, N16 (081 254 6198): Paul Rutherford Qt (3); Elton Dean/Howard Riley Qt (4); Elton Dean/Harry Beckert Qt (17); Dreamtime, Spontaneous Music Ensemble, Evan Parker Trio (18); John Stevens Qt (25); Lol Coxhill & Pat Thomas (31); John Stevens & Derek Bailey (Aug 1).
THE ORANGE (071 371 4317): Lonnie Liston Smith (June 1 & 2).
PITSHANGER MANOR MUSEUM, W5 (081 567 1227): Barney Kessel Trio (9).
THE SOUTH BANK COMPLEX (071 928 8800): Tuck & Patti plus Jason Rebello (June 30); Wynton Marsalis Septet (13); Take 6 (17); Gerry Mulligan Tenset (18); Keith Jarrett/Gary Peacock/Jack DeJohnette 'In Memory Of Miles' (20); Marisa Monte and Guests (21); Chuck Corea & Friends (26).
TENOR CLEF (071 729 2476): Ian Shaw Band, John Etheridge (5); Benny Green Trio (12–14); Howard Alden (22–24); Noel McCulla (26).
TOWN & COUNTRY, NW5 (071 284 0303): The Yellow Jackets with special guest Shakatak (7).
WATERMANS ARTS CENTRE (081 568 1176): Tomorrow's Warriors Today (4/18); Blow The Fuse (11).

New items and listings should reach us by 2nd July for inclusion in the August issue.

A (NEW) EDITOR'S IDEA



ILLUSTRATIONS: VERONICA BAILEY

A SUBSCRIBER since issue two, a contributor since issue 13, I often used to assume that other readers were mostly like myself. An editor, responsible for decisions about what matters, what's boring, what to include, what to omit, has to be the first to recognise the errors such thinking can lead to. Still, I think it's safe to say that, coupled with a fondness for argument and a sense that music (good and bad) matters much more than we any of us can always well articulate, *Wire*-readers share with me a fierce suspicion of sentimentality.

So when a wave of it hits – as it recently has – and I find myself happy to luxuriate in it, a part of me is thinking: is the beginning of the end? Sitting in the Conway Hall at the First Annual Festival of Experimental Music a week or two back, I was assailed by something which certainly pretty closely resembled sentimentality, and I found myself enjoying it.

Festivals can be misleading: you extrapolate from the behaviour and reactions of those who attend to the speculatively vast armies of who didn't actually quite make it there. But I don't think what I felt was entirely wishful thinking. It went beyond the glow you feel when you see newcomers going through something you know you once experienced (before you got so jaded and calloused and cynical); or the pleasure at the sight of such doughty warriors of persistence as saxophonist Lou Gare, say, comfortably billed beside brash, unspoiled youngsters like Die, Trip Computer, Die!, helping you convince yourself that the "experimental" is a living process.

It was the sense that, at last, the dreary uniformity over the last couple of years not of music itself – which in its overall variety at least is healthy enough – but of the ways we're allowed to engage with it, the narrowing of what we're sensibly entitled to expect from it, has brought into palpable

being an alert, frustrated constituency who *refuse* to believe that music can only ever again be leisure-time relaxant and/or part-time kick.

Composer-critic Virgil Thompson – when asked what the purpose of the music critic actually was – used to point out that nothing else stands between the management's paid-for publicity and the public. Without critics, all we'd get is PR handbills. He might have added how quickly PR learns to adopt the language and mindset of a successful – meaning persuasive – line of criticism: which is why any critical journal worthy of the name must bring together so many contradictory strategies of discussion, if it doesn't want to be turned into another industry hand-out. Its value comes not in the "facts" (which are only buried opinions), but in the disagreements, the rival maps of possible value.

We're always pleased when you write in to say good things about *The Wire*, but in a curious way, we're almost as gratified when you write in to protest, to dissent, to challenge us in our own complacency. It proves music – across the board – is still genuinely a field of unforced passion, of unexplored possibility, of overlooked or misunderstood moral energy. Which is why, if a cultural journalist has any notion of self-preservation, they have to take to heart the motto HAVE FUN STARTING ARGUMENTS: if they're any good, they'll start them whether they want to or not; why not enjoy them?

In the age of black metal, thrash jazz, opera in the park and *In Bad With Madonna*, whatever, when our pantheon necessarily includes such figures as Anthony Braxton, Laurie Anderson, Brian Eno, Miles Davis, John Zorn, John Cage, it's simply unhelpful – if we take their work seriously – to put hard and fast rules on what we can cover. Narrowness of focus can bring a false sense of clarity – in the end, the pursuit of knowledge really is better than clinging to ill-informed prejudice. If believing this means occasionally pursuing what some see as heresy – Michael Jackson or Sid Vicious on the cover – we mustn't be afraid of that.

We don't neglect the past or the present of black American music: it's part of *The Wire*'s being. Ten years and a hundred issues on, with all we've achieved, it's a mark of the force of this music that we still have so much to do, that we have to pursue its unique – and vast – contribution so far and wide among other, "unrelated" musics, some popular, others obscure. More than half a century ago, Jazz (whatever its current limit of definition) upped and asked the biggest, hardest questions of Western art-music, about prejudice, among other things; the turbulence that Armstrong, Parker and others began is still with us, the ripples are still travelling. The job of *The Wire* – as I see it – is to record them. I don't think it's sentimental to believe that bearing witness to artistic courage – or unexpected felicity, wherever it may arise – matters, that cynicism is as much an enemy as anything. I don't think it's sentimental to believe we can have fun trying. Let's find out.

MARK SINKER

Editor



MICK MERCER

GITANE DEMONE: singer

"IT'S BURN'T." Guitarist James Beam is crestfallen. It's early afternoon in Amsterdam and singer Gitane Demone has insisted that James clean himself up before tonight's show. It was bad enough when this involved the mysteries of washing clothes by hand, but the overzealous nature of her heating system has left a dull brown mark on James's favourite red and white striped t-shirt.

On reflection, it's not the worst thing that could have happened on what is proving to be a day fraught with first night nerves. Tonight in Rotterdam, Gitane Demone and her new band – James, Johnny Additionalist (drums), Phil Deacon (bass) and Pi U Mosso (keyboards) – will make their live debut in an unlikely support slot with Camden's finest exponents of rockabilly "nouveau" Gallon Drunk. While Gallon Drunk's James Johnston will howl at his audience, Gitane will be winning her over with gently melodic songs rooted in a love of jazz.

The show and the recent release of the single *A Heavenly Melamboly* via the Dutch label Torso signal the end of a difficult period of transition. It was just over two years ago that the Californian-born singer walked out on the hardcore/goth rockers Christian Death after a gig at London's Marquee. She relocated to Amsterdam (she now splits her time between London and Holland) to reappraise her career. The process didn't involve such radical musical changes as might be imagined. Even in the setting of Christian Death's sometimes ugly and extreme guitar music, she had often proved an incongruous figure, taking centre stage from frontman Valor to sing "Gloomy Sunday" or provide an acappella encore to an audience of spellbound, leather-clad Goth teens.

"I liked the intensity of the gothic rock music I was doing," she says. "We hit intense points – those same intense points you find hitting your highest peak doing free jazz... or any kind of music."

Whilst still with Christian Death, she used to spend holidays working at Thelonus, a centre for free jazz in Rotterdam. Serving behind the bar to pay for her trips from London, she took the opportunity to improvise with various musicians, including such visiting celebrities as Frank Wright and Woody Shaw. Smiling at the memory, she recounts how Shaw improvised a blues with her on an evening when the soundman was away – before telling her never to sing without a microphone again.

Her rare live shows have also seen her working on performance pieces. "I did a four song performance at a Festival of Perversity in Holland, a performance around facets of sexuality," she says matter-of-factly. "Each piece dealt with a different part of sexuality. For the first piece I went on stage blindfolded and handcuffed. I had a dancer who also acted out these different parts, a mistress, a man, an androgynous figure – we did a lot of acting out of the pieces on stage."

Last year, with a minor member of royalty in attendance, a similar piece performed at a party organised by rubber/fetishist clothes seller De Mask and Skin Two saw her on the cover of *New Of The World* – an unflattering photograph was printed beneath a lurid "ROYAL AT RUBBER SEX ORGY!" headline and fifteen minutes of irrelevant notoriety were Gitanes'.

But tonight's performance will see a shift towards less theatrical shows. "I've decided that all the performance art is not so interesting to me. I just want to get seriously down to the basics of expression with the voice and with the musicians and songs."

A 33-year-old mother of two, Gitanes' ambition is to emulate that select band of singers whose individuality of voice conveys and explores the weight of their accumulated knowledge. A list of her favourite vocalists ranges from the expected – Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday – to the unlikely: Shirley Bassey, who Gitanes admires for her tone rather than her mainstream choice of material.

"My life has been completely full of experiences since my earliest memories when I was three – very extreme experiences – and it's just given me more experience which in turn goes into my voice," she says mysteriously. "It's very funny. I can go through some extreme emotional upheaval and not feel like singing for... well, the longest has been two months. Then I'll start singing again and all this experience – even of the two months that happened to tick that off – it's there in my voice and that's fine with me."

Rotterdam's Popular Theatre is an odd venue, with so many different levels from dance floor to top bar that it looks like an ambitiously constructed adventure playground. Desperately understandably hesitant moments, the band cope well. Built around the fluid percussion of Johnny Additionalist, their music is occasionally house-tinged and located some miles from rock's 4/4 beat.

Gitanes herself is a figure who demands attention. Dressed in a rubber catsuit and looking something like Madonna's wicked cousin, she's completely in command of both her voice and her stage. (Although the marauding figure of James Beam proudly replete with a new t-shirt also grabs the eye.) Once upon a time after an improvised session, the late Frank Wright bluntly told Gitanes: "You yell too much." Not any more Frank, not any more.

BY JONATHAN WRIGHT

LAPHROAIG



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THE RAZOR'S RETURN

Defunkt's Joe Bowie looks back on a decade of No Wave funk with Phil England. Headshot: Gino Sprio

"CONFRONTATIONAL, HIGH-ENERGY powerhouse funk" is how you might want to describe Defunkt's classic period, when they first emerged in the early 80s. The three Hannibal releases documenting the period — *Defunkt*, *Thermonuclear Sweat* and *The Razor's Edge* — have all been deleted and distilled into the excellent *Avoid The Funk* anthology. On returning in 1987 after five years of inactivity due to leader Joe Bowie's lapse into substance abuse, critics seemed to agree — at least on the recording front — Defunkt were never quite the same thing.

"That's what a lot of the writers say here, but that's just a matter of opinion," Joe insists. "I mean, it was just a changing period. I think it was basically due to not having enough production time."

Last year's *Live at the Knitting Factory* was another duffer — naff mix, big boomy room sound . . .

"I'll admit to that. That's a horrible sounding record. The music was fun, a lot of energy, but the mix was horrible. We did the best we could with the DAT recording. Leaves a lot to be desired."

Which brings us up to date. Word is, Defunkt are hotter than ever: back fighting and with a renewed social conscience. Living in Maryland in the country, commuting to New York regularly, working out in the gym, taking a conscious decision to formulate and tighten up the sound, being given the opportunity to record properly — these are some of the things which have helped Joe Bowie make the new album *Crisis* (Enemy) undisputable evidence of a return to form.

Back again is the full punch of the brass section (brother Byron Bowie has been brought in again to make a three-way frontline attack) and the rhythm section is back in pumping gear. But the sound has evolved and matured and sometimes the groove is swung lower, stretched out.

"The music now is much clearer to me," says Bowie, "everything is just a lot clearer to me. So this is like a real fun period."

"Right now I'm concentrating on clarity. High energy is really important, we still use elements of avant-garde jazz. I'm interested in getting a big, clean sound. I want relevant, sometimes ambiguous, but pertinent lyricism used, I want a lot of rhythm used and I want it strated very clearly."

In contrast to his exuberant stage presence, in conversation Joe is solidly relaxed and quietly alert, evidently sure and confident. He has good reason to be. If the previous studio album, *Hero*, verged on the embarrassing, then *Crisis*, by contrast, is full of ideas, fully-fleshed and fully realised.

"At last we've found out how to record this band. We designed and layered the songs in a small pre-production studio over a three or four month period so we knew exactly what we wanted and what we didn't want — samples and everything included. And then we spent two weeks in a big 24-track studio with a really nice board."

The songs don't sound laboured or overworked, but developed . . .

"It takes time to feel relaxed, to really make the tunes swing with the difficult horn lines. By the time we'd worked two months on a song it would really be getting to sound good, then we'd record it 'cos we'd got a feel for it."

Six of the songs on the new album are collaborations between the poetry of Janos Gar and Joe Bowie's music. So who is — how do you pronounce it? — "yanosh gat?"

That's perfect. He's a Hungarian poet who's been in New York as long as I have. He used to run a club called Squat Theatre, that was a revolutionary theatre group that was exiled from Hungary many years back, and Defunkt got their start playing there — we played there every week. There was a lot of





opportunity to rehearse. This is in 23rd St in New York City. The combination of us working together proved to be interesting – the way I'm able to help him edit his poetry to make songs. We collaborated on the first Defunkt album and I thought it was a good idea to do some more experiments on *Crisis*."

The combination of potent elements from rock, funk, jazz and soul has been one of Defunkt's defining characteristics and has provided the impetus for the current rock-funk-rap concoctions of the likes of The Red Hot Chili Peppers ("really nice guys – they're quick to acknowledge we made an influence"), Living Colour (Vernon Reid was in Defunkt in the early 80s), and Fishbone.

As a major influence, Joe cites Miles Davis and has dedicated *Crisis* to his music and spirit. "Miles was a great idol of mine, mainly because of his fusion with rock'n'roll music and jazz – I just wanted to take that a step further and include voice."

There's also a certain debt to free music. Joe is the younger brother of the Art Ensemble of Chicago's Lester Bowie and has his own history of playing with free luminaries of the calibre of Anthony Braxton and Cecil Taylor. He's still involved with that scene: "I play with AACM in Chicago, Ethnic Heritage Ensemble, Kahil El'Zabar – that's a regular group, Sebastian Plekater Quartet – very good young jazz musicians from Europe and New York. But I don't have the time to be so active since I'm so busy with Defunkt."

For the health of the band, Joe encourages the rest of Defunkt to be active in other projects. Bassist Kim Clarke and guitarist Bill Bickford have a group called Bigfoot which regularly tours Europe and trumpeter John Mulkerin has his

Liquid Hips.

Joe's personal well-being is kept in check by living outside New York. "The band is based in New York and I'm there in the week, but I live in the country in Maryland. It's a lot healthier, a lot more conducive for thought and creativity for me at this point. I lived in New York for 12, 13 years but now I find more energy and recharging by living in the countryside. By making frequent visits to the city I'm able to be a lot more focused."

New York missed out on the recent round of riots sparked by the Rodney King trial . . .

"Let's see. It's not midsummer. When the bear goes up these kind of things really flare. And I think a lot of them ain't gonna be racially motivated either, it's gonna be economics – the state's in big trouble, a lot of people are out of work. A lot of disappointment with the political scheme. New York runs on its own time. New York never does as you anticipate. New York is like a different country. New York acts on its own."

Meanwhile back in England . . . "We've been missing out the UK for a number of years. I hate to say this but the UK is kinda fucked. It's really difficult to organise, they don't want to pay money, it's just hard to get the same kind of conditions [as in Europe or Japan]. It's not set up to accommodate. But we'd like to open up the UK again. We're trying to get our feet back in."

AVAILABLE DISCOGRAPHY

Avoid the Funk (1988, Hannibal 1320)

Heroes (1990, DIW 838)

Live at the Knitting Factory (1991, Enemy, EMY 122-2 CD)

Crisis (1992, Enemy EMY 135-2 CD)



ROGER ENO
Between Tides
ASC01 ASCD01



HAROLD BUDD
*Abandoned Cities/
Serpent (in Quicksilver)*
ASC08 ASCD08



JOHN CALE
Words For The Dying
ASC09 ASCD09



VARIOUS
Music For Films III
ASC04 ASCD04



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ASC10 ASCD10



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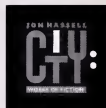
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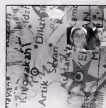
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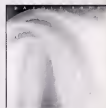
**BRIAN ENO/
JOHN CALE**
Wrong Way Up
AS12 ASC12 ASCD12



JON HASSELL
City: Works of Fiction
ASC11 ASCD11



DJIVAN GASPARYAN
*I Will Not Be Sad In
This World*
ASC06 ASCD06



HAROLD BUDD
The White Arcades
ASC03 ASCD03

CINE QUAE NON

BARRY ADAMSON, FORMER
BAD SEED BASS-PLAYER, IS REBORN
AS MANCHESTER'S MORRICONE,
SOUNDTRACKING UNMADE MOVIES.
BIBA KOPF CHECKS THE CON-
TINUITY. JUSTIN QUICK KEEPS
EVERYTHING IN FOCUS.

WHEN IS a concept album not a concept album? Answer: when it's an imaginary film soundtrack. Popular music's field of operation has become hemmed in by common consensus, hardened by fear of derision into decree. Anything that opposes the tyranny of the dancebeat without falling in step with the indie cuties, the guitar armies, or any of the lifestyle accessory musics flagged in designer ads, risks being isolated, like some disfiguring disease. Admittedly very bad memories of British art rock provide good cause for suspicion of the "extended composition" of recording artists. But worse is After Punk's stalinisation, and the consequent periodic stagnation of rock and pop.

Without desiring to implicate their creators in a grand cultural strategy far away from their individual motives, a small number of imaginary film music composers have penetrated deep inside the pop cultural field. The Belgian label Made To Measure has secured a marketing niche for instrumental albums — it passes them off as fake movie music. Under the guise of Steroid Maximus, Jim Thirlwell has produced his most controlled descent into white-knuckle *noise* on the album *Quilombo*, sampled spiroon horns a luridly compelling substitute for his usual Foetus voice. And, on his current album *Soul Murder*, today's main feature Barry Adamson audaciously deploys spy thriller and suspense themes,

among many others, to explore what it is to grow up non-white in Britain today.

It might be conceptual and primarily instrumental, but this shadowy new genre has an inbuilt safety mechanism that prevents it going the same way as 70s progressive rock. The imaginary soundtrack's implied functional nature safeguards it from pomp and excess. Also, it has gifted its adherents with a battery of cinematic devices for making a popular music that doesn't capitulate to the ruling beat tyrannies. Applying film-making methods to composition, Barry Adamson jump-cuts music and listener alike through a spectral soundscape of emotions, incorporating gut-wrenching excitement, laughter, anger, terror and awe in the presence of low and unimaginable beauty. From the movies he has picked up how to accelerate or brake narrative, how montaging of contrasts can raise eyebrows and issues, how to locate place and period through pastiche. The use of musical homage and parody furnishes him with an economic means of triggering a chain of different resonances in the listener. In Barry Adamson's work you very quickly get the full picture even as the image itself is never there.

WHEN BRIAN Eno launched the idea of the imaginary film soundtrack with his *Music For Films* records, he might



have had something other in mind than a form hatched out of parody, pastiche and loving adaptation. Nonetheless, his reasoning holds good for Adamson *et al.* Listeners, he reasons, are resistant to instrumental music because songs accustom them to a strong narrative centre. With soundtracks the film provides the centre, around which the music can abstract itself. Film relieves music of purely musical narrative responsibilities. Implying a piece is a soundtrack places it in a context where people regularly hear abstract instrumental work constructed round an absent narrative without difficulty.

"IT COMES FROM YEARS AND YEARS OF HATE — THAT'S WHY I WENT BACK TO 1919 FOR ONE TRACK. — IT'S A SOURCE OF FEARFUL THINKING PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATIONS AND THEN I PICK IT UP. LIKE IF I DON'T GET UP AT 6 AM I'M A LAZY NEGRO. I CAN'T THINK WHY, BUT THE ANSWER IS BECAUSE I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT STUFF FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS."

Needless to say, Adamson's music-for-films is more packed with incident than Eno's. In addition, he wittily manipulates film music genre styles to frame his absent narratives. Then he pours into them the accumulated pleasures and torments shaping his creativity: paradoxically, if not perversely, Adamson works a strong autobiographical strain through a music practice often considered secondary and impersonal because of its functional origins. But Adamson grew up at the movies: "When I was seven I would go to the movies whenever I was not very happy," he recalls. It comes natural to him to express his deepest feelings in music attuned to the film experiences that helped articulate them.

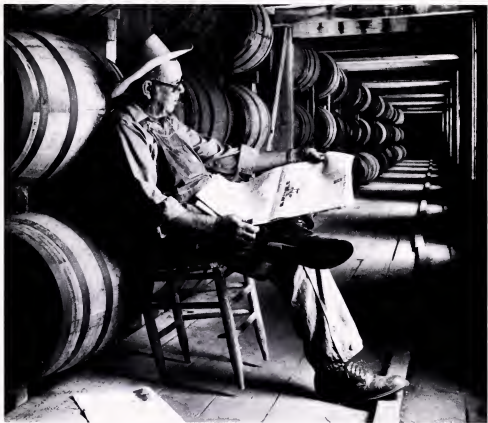
PEOPLE'S LIVES are weirder than the bare bones of their biographies indicate. The full weirdness only begins to emerge in the telling, the storyteller gradually revealing himself in the way he tells it. Unfolding his saga through the subterfuge of the imaginary film soundtrack, Adamson's *Soul*

Murder seduces you with attractive, familiar-sounding elements culled from spy pictures, cold war thrillers, porny French romances and so on. But once inside, his themes transport you deep into a troubled past struggling to come to terms with the manifest contradictions of being born to West Indian and British parents and growing up in Britain. His playful references patchwork a common heritage of Bond movies and so on. The way he synthesizes them in chill atmospheres, contrasts them with ever darkening moods, or runs them counter to the content of the record's few spoken narratives, reveals a man painfully struggling to come to terms with a legacy of pain.

The pain begins long before he was born. Past atrocities perpetrated against his forebears reverberate through the black man's unconscious. On "A Gentle Man of Colour", a news-reider coolly reads a horrifying report of a 1919 lynching, underscored by a theme that despairs at the mob's pointless savagery. Earlier, the record has opened with a black voice choking back the anger that fumes over a litany of violence, to siren-like keyboards which shape into a refrain at once melancholy and poised with fear. A knock at the door personalises the action. "Sorry to disturb you, Mr Adamson. There are two gentlemen to see you. Police department." The scene jumpcuts a jaunty jazzleaze backup to a comic rap streaming out of Adamson's racing unconscious, jokes and puns deflecting hurt. "Take a good look at my face and whadya make? Yeah, that's right, I'm a mixed race! No I don't mean an Englishman, a Scotsman, a Negro and a Russian all competing against each other in some significant track and field event . . .". Elsewhere anger isn't vented so much as transformed into trances of hatred.

An extraordinarily complex work, it's a wonder its creator emerges at the other end, scarred maybe, but stronger, even as the many tensions it keeps in play throughout stay unresolved.

"The whole idea of *Soul Murder*," says Adamson, "is about being immersed in a state of shame, confronting it and in the process constructing your own identity, instead of taking on one that isn't yours at all, which is the ultimate cover-up of shame. Maybe you can use the anger, the seething resentment. Or maybe you can live in a world of victimisation, manifest in denial of one's colour by way of behaviour, dress or self-putdown. That comes from years and years of hate — that's why I went back to 1919 for one track. It's a source of fearful thinking passed down through generations and then I pick it up. Like if I don't get up at 6 am I'm a lazy Negro. I can't think why, but the answer is because I've been told that stuff for thousands of years. So the record's about confronting that stuff. For me it's a cathartic thing, a psychological journey of self-exploration so you no longer have to live with an emotion of deep guilt."



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It's not just anger. The psychic damage is partially repaired in dreamy, beautiful passages and through the humour masking the serious intent of tracks like the reggaefied "007, A Fantasy Bond Theme". Rare is a record that is at once

"IT'S LIKE WHEN YOU SEE A FILM SUPPOSEDLY REPRESENTING THE DIRECTOR'S OWN STORY, AND YOU KNOW IT'LL SAY THEY ALL WENT OFF TO VIETNAM IN THE END. BUT I LIKE TO HEAR OTHER PEOPLE'S STORIES."

immensely entertaining and profoundly affecting.

"The humour is to offset the sadness of it all," says Adamson. "Humour signals an acceptance of things that might have once been painful. If I can laugh about it, it's pretty much I've got an angle on it, like, yeah, that's me, that's okay."

Soul Murder is Barry Adamson's second official solo record. His prehistory as bassist in Magazine and one-time Bad Seed scarcely prepares you for the music that has followed. It has all contained an autobiographical element, albeit sometimes obliquely, each release adding to the mythical Adamson family saga.

"The thing is," Adamson smiles, "it's all a lie. It seems to be an ongoing saga. But it draws together the things that interest me, that I can apply to my own life. Like, oh great, there's an open sore I can have a good old scratch at. Some people may find that indulgent. It's like when you see a film supposedly representing the director's own story, and you know it'll say they all went off to Vietnam in the end. But I like to hear other people's stories."

His first single was a great sleaze-dripping evocation of Elmer Bernstein's theme to *Man With The Golden Arm*, backed with a playful tumble through the theme of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. . . . His debut album *Moss Side Story* (1988) soundtracked a docudrama about this West Indian gang known as the Yardies moving in on the drug action on his hometown Manchester's desolated Moss Side. Arranged for samples, electronics, occasional guitar, brass and strings, it musically creates the kind of emotionally blasted cityscape where the night is pierced through with police sirens and the crackle of the car radio bulletins that transmits the absolute minimum of information needed to shore up the story.

Inevitably such deliberately filmic music won him attention from movie producers. To date he has scored three, though only one of them, *Delusion*, has been released on record. It sounds curiously dispassionate next to the fullness of his other releases.

"It was actually different working on a real soundtrack," admits Adamson. "It's all very well creating mood pieces about which people say, 'that would go great with a film'. Actually marrying sound, image and emotion together, moving the film along and hopefully retaining something of yourself is a totally different experience. With *Delusion* I mickeymoused a fair bit, believing that's what you did. You've got the technology that helps you sit the image on the beat, so it's easy to get drawn in by that. The other film work I've done is a bit more challenging."

By contrast Adamson's imaginary film soundtracks are exemplary in the way mood and melody keep up a constant interrogation of their difficult themes until some truth is at long last revealed. Then the lights come up, the door flings open, and their creator passes through it, a little lighter on his feet.

JAZZ SPECTRUM



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GREAT *recordings* LOST

In a new series starting this issue, we reassess the underrated, the unloved and the misunderstood – the records the juke-box forgot.

First off, Jonathan Romney celebrates the AOR entryism of Detroit deviationists Was (Not Was).



WAS (NOT WAS)

Born To Laugh at Tornadoes (Geffen/Ze, 1983)

Was (Not Was)'s debut single "Wheel Me Out" was a hell of a record – two ageing wise-acs from Detroit, a music boffin and a jazz critic, teaming up with the psychoanalyst mother of one of them to scare the hell out of disco. The prime statement of intent on the Ze manifesto LP *Mutant Disco*, its use of local boy guitar activist Wayne Kramer pre-empted Eddie Van Halen's more famously genre-cracking cameo on "Beat It" by a good two years. After a display of such honed, sneering precision, the Bros' first LP was so-so, an embarrassment of riches trying to buckle down to being assembly-line funk, and that's more or less what they've been doing ever since. With the exception of this second album, rich and strange and all the more so for being so innocuously conventional, *Born to Laugh* confounded expectations by turning out to be a proper AOR rock record with all the right things guaranteed to shift

units; real songs, real singers, real production. Everything in fact except a real band and the slightest possibility of the listener identifying with anyone on it. That's what gives the record its inimitable feeling of blankness and sets it up as a properly ironic *artefact*, as opposed to the more demonstrative, breath-wasting *utterances* they've tended to produce since.

Partly the joy of this record was the realisation that the Was Brothers could do anything they cared to, and were cynical enough to try. This wasn't a concept record in any normal sense, but a record directed by *auteurs* – the Brothers could have been Becker and Fagen but chose to be Leiber and Stoller. *Born to Laugh* addresses bubblegumland with the sort of voices it expects to hear, but the messages are wrong. From the opening reprise of the band's running theme "Out Come The Freaks", this is an extended essay in social abjection. So you have the then-famous Doug Fieger (nerdish voice of powerpopers the Knack) singing bouncy, tuneful and cruelly amoral songs advocating the joys of betrayal and deceit, and Ozzy Osbourne singing a roarily triumphal ditty about how you *just can't win* ("You can't feed the hungry/Can't talk Shakespeare with a monkey") – compare the new version on the band's "Hello Dad . . . I'm In Jail" compilation, and the way the change from poker-faced laconic to Kim Basinger dance groove flattens the song's sense of purpose into a glossy matter-of-factness. Most generically subversive of all, velvet-tinged vet Mel Tormé was inveigled in (on the strength of a

rave review from David Was) to croon a luscious ballad about some poor schmuck taking a wrestling dive and never being the same again.

These hymns of vileness and despair were painted in the brightest colours, and a couple of years later you could have called this the archetypal MTV record, except that W(NW) have always steered clear of the lure of the visuals. A *Zelig* among mainstream pop records, this was not just a clever ironists's prank, either. It was too thorough-going for that, and the songs are too consistently cynical – not to say insightful – to be dismissed. There was also the duo's single most successful moment of flagrant discordant absurdism – David Was doing his patent worried-man narrative on "The Party Broke Up", a robotic nightmare revision of "Mama Told Me Not To Come". Since this album W(NW) have mistakenly courted the marketplace by being a little but not too weird, a soft-surrealist funk showband (and most recently, genial warm-ups for Dire Straits In Concert). The idea of doing dance fodder from an ironic distance was one that Was (Not Was) kick-started in the 80s; repeatedly they've shown that the trick can yield its rewards a little too easily. On "Born to Laugh at Tornadoes", they went for something much tougher, much less directly gratifying. On it, they subvert their own history, past and subsequent, by assimilating themselves totally to the pop industry, a fabulous, duplicitous sleight of hand. The latest Was (Not Was) track is an INXS cover. ■

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VAS BOZIKIS

Pianist Mal Waldron is called up by Francis Davis, to chat about Europe, America, the past and the present.

OF BOP AND BILLIE

MAL WALDRON belongs to what one wag I know dubs the "obsessive" school of hard bop. Crowded, low-ceilinged and locked in, fixated on a handful of notes near middle C, and invariably in minor, Waldron's music is built around tension and release — but sometimes just tension. (You oughta hear his 1984 record of "Beat It"). This sometimes results in Waldron being compared to Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Lamont Johnson, and Terry Riley, straight composers whose work he knows only by reputation.

Besides, as Waldron himself pointed out during a phone interview from Belgium (he keeps a residence there and another in Munich), *his* music is improvised. "I start out with three notes, and it leads to another note and another. I switch to automatic, and it just happens."

So, better to say that jazz has its own minimalist tradition (think of Miles modes, Duke C-jam, and practically any number by Monk, Waldron's primary influence), to which Waldron, at 65, remains a vital contributor.

In contrast to his nervous pianistics Waldron's conversation is amiable and expansive, even when explaining that racism

drove him from the U.S. in 1965.

His first trip abroad, in 1958, as Billie Holiday's accompanist, "was like seeing the other side of the coin. In America, I was black and not taken seriously as an artist because of that. In Europe, being black made me better than anybody else. [Europeans] feel that blacks have a head start on everybody else, in terms of jazz."

Since Waldron, who once described jazz as "protest" music, admitted to thinking so, too, he was asked if he felt ambivalent about fleeing the U.S. in 1965—the year of the Selma march, Malcolm X's assassination, the Watts riots, the premiere of LeRoi Jones's *The Dutchman*, and the release of John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*—when things were reaching a boil, both politically and artistically.

"No," said Waldron, who returns to the U.S. for a round of concerts about twice annually, "because I took my identity as a black American with me. Who I am didn't change because of my surroundings had. My life is inside of me. I didn't really *decide* to go, at that time. It just happened that I was given the opportunity to go to Paris to do the score for *Trois Chambres A Manhattan* [French director Marcel Carne's adaptation of a Georges Simenon crime novel]. I just felt happier in Europe, more relaxed."

DURING THE conversation, Waldron solved a literary mystery involving himself, Billie Holiday, and the late Frank O'Hara.

O'Hara's much-anthologized "The Day Lady Died" takes place on a summer afternoon in 1959, a mundane day like any other for the father of American poetic "personalism" (he gets a shoeshine, withdraws money from the bank, consumes a hamburger and a malted, buys a book and an expensive bottle of whiskey as gifts for the couple who are having him over for dinner that evening, and pages through a copy of *New World Writing* "to see what the poets in Ghana are up to these days") until he learns of the death of Billie Holiday by seeing a copy of the *New York Post* "with her face on it":

and I am sweating a lot by now and thinking of leaning on the john door in the 5 SPOT while she whispered a song along the keyboard to Mal Waldron and everybody and I stopped breathing.

Here's the puzzle. Until 1967, performers used to need police-issued cabaret cards in order to appear in New York nightclubs. A cabaret card could be revoked for any legal infraction, and Holiday lost hers in 1947, following her first arrest, in Philadelphia, for possession of heroin. Wouldn't this have made it impossible for O'Hara to have heard her at the Five Spot, on New York's Bowery, anytime during the period that Waldron served as her pianist (the last three years of her life)? Was O'Hara's memory playing tricks on him? Or did he just like the name "Mal Waldron" for its assonance?

No, because Waldron remembers Holiday standing up and singing from the audience on the night in question. "I was playing at the Five Spot with my own trio, and she was there

for moral support. Although she wouldn't have been allowed to take a job there, there was no law against her sitting in, and that was what she did. If she liked you, she was like a big sister, warm and giving," Waldron said of the persecuted woman who was his daughter's godmother. "If she didn't like you, she'd call you motherfucker and walk right by you. She was a beautiful person. She never asked you to play a certain way behind her. She let you go your own way. She was like another horn player, really."

WALDRON'S CAREER has been so eventful that his tenure with Holiday, instead of being the crowning achievement it would have been for most pianists of his generation, amounts to just one more credential—much like his participation in Charles Mingus's first Jazz Workshop in the early '50s, and his membership in an Eric Dolphy-Booker Little quintet that stayed together only long enough for a week's engagement at the Five Spot in 1961 but has since entered the annals of legend.

In the late 50s and early 60s, Waldron was, in effect, house pianist for Prestige. In addition to making a half-dozen albums of his own for Bob Weinstock, he served as *de facto* music director for innumerable dates by others on the roster, including Gene Ammons, Jackie McLean, and John Coltrane (for whom he wrote "Soul Eyes," just thinking of that big, romantic sound he had, with that built-in echo).

"I wrote and arranged a good many of the tunes. And because there were no rehearsals as such, I made them easy to sightread and based them on chord changes that the guys would be familiar with, and that lent themselves to improvisation. As an accompanist, I tried to be supportive. I voiced underneath the horns, and I never got too flashy."

In Europe over the last 25 years, he's been fantastically prolific, recording (by his own conservative estimate) approximately 100 albums as a leader. This doesn't even count his 25 to 30 dates (even he isn't sure how many) as a co-leader with (among others) McLean, Marion Brown, and Steve Lacy (his most fruitful ongoing partnership).

Since his first visit to Japan in 1970, he's been lionized there—so much so that, in 1975, *Billboard* listed him among that country's top-ten concert attractions, along with the likes of Chicago, the Carpenters, and David Bowie.

"In Japan, they still listen to koto and shakuhachi music, which are both very low decibel. They appreciate subtlety because their ears haven't been subjected to the steady punishment of America. The reason they like me so much, it's like one Japanese critic said, 'Mal Waldron plays in minor keys,' which they like over there. They respond to sadness, that alone quality they hear in my music."

BORN IN New York in 1925 (not '26 as stated in most jazz reference books—angry at the U.S. Army for having taken two years away from him, he used to "take one of them back" when filling out biographical questionnaires), Waldron stu-



In this issue, the first of our second century, we pause to examine the lie of the land, to see where music's got to, and where it's going – not just in some of the big and easily labelled genres (Latin, Dance, Jazz) but in some of the hazy areas in between, the (presently unmapped?) frontier territory that's the testing ground for future strategies.

all quiet ON THE CUTTING EDGE?

*Ben Watson examines the meaning of the strange romance between
High Modernism and post-jazz improvisation.*



PEOPLE MAKE music, but hardly in the circumstances of their own choosing. The listener, marooned on the sofa of private consumption (carefully positioned midway between the speakers of the stereo) is "free" to navigate a postmodernist utopia where track follows track in any order, and links can be conjured between country gospel and Caribbean proto-bluebeat; a Xenakis score and an Alex Maguire improv; Gary

Glitter and Laibach; Johnny "Guitar" Watson and Edgard Varèse; a homemade smart-arse tape compilation and the latest Zorn.

But because music's dynamic is ultimately not a matter of revolving plastic, but the residue of socially significant symbolic acts, this mix 'n' match heaven is a mere ideal. Social boundaries remain as real as the truncheons of the LAPD: crossing them involves real-time transgression, and as racist demagogues close national frontiers to the displaced and the economically deprived, any merely imaginary transgression becomes a kind of compensatory consolation.

Postmodernist rhetoric insists that minimalism committed the final transgression by opening up classical music to repetition and volume, pop-style presentation and marketing – but at best this is only an aesthetic of privatisation: the gulf between Modern Composition and the audience for classical music could not be bridged, so instead it has been hushed up (rewrites of Haydn and Mozart and Bartok – especially Bartok – clog the repertoire).

Sad stuff. Let's think about black America instead. In the course of a century jazz has traced the same trajectory that Western music did over half a millennium: a drive towards freedom, self-consciousness and autonomy (it's also got noisier). Once the cutting edge of a rising class's war on religion, Western art twisted, in the hands of the winners, to become first their conscience and then their nemesis. 12-tone music, as unacceptable to the "educated" listener today as it was in the 1920s, was a break with tradition that tradition demanded but traditionalists refused to hear.

Nothing illustrates the "objectivity" of art better than the adoption of atonality by jazz musicians. Far from being merely an excessive emotional indulgence on the part of certain turn-of-the-century Viennese, atonality is the necessary price for a free combination of all musical possibility. Academic serialism lost its way; but free jazz took atonality where it needed to go: into contingency, confrontation, individualised playing and the blues.

Artistic forces seriously opposed to commercial homogenisation will tend to converge. Just as commercial considerations will cause rock 'n' roller Bruce Springsteen to adopt a disco rhud for airplay (or Madonna to use metal guitar textures) – a genre "transcendence" that's really a diet of the eversame – the adoption of atonality by jazz (and its convergence with classical music) reflects the universalising power of capital, but from the opposition's P.O.V.. The implacable protest of late 60s free jazz fuses with the best efforts of the radical Europeans: Shepp, Braxton, Coursil, Brötzmann are the true allies/neighbours of Penderecki, Berio, Boulez, Stockhausen.

Today it may well be that the improvisors are going to

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constitute the saving grace of the classical avant garde. Richard Barrett (one of a group of beleaguered British composers trapped under the "new complexity" umbrella) uses the dislocations of improvisation in his closely scored music, adding a shock that the stochastics of Xenakis never really deliver. Dismissive of the establishment's distrust of Black music, he declares Anthony Braxton more important than Arnold Schoenberg. He is also involved in the improvising ensemble Furt, who dredge severely impersonal music out of voice samples. Such inert hatred for communication links them to AMM. Isn't this just "making it up as you go along?" I ask. "Well – what do composers do?" he ripostes.

Such debate is constant, on the (little-heard) cutting edge of art-music. Martin Archer (whose Sheffield-based Hornweb mafia generates crucial music at the hard-to-find juncture of composition and improvisation) argues that "it's easier to get what you want from improvisors" (as opposed to forcing score-readers against the grain of their learned technique). Relayed to Derek Bailey, such comments make his "blood run cold": Bailey insists that, despite their best intentions, composition has caused such brilliant musicians as Barry Guy and Alex Schlippenbach to limit their musicians rather than spur them on. Perhaps surprisingly, this most famous stickler for freedom picks John Zorn as maybe the only current composer not to sap his musicians' power (check *Calbra*, folks).

The institution that is classical music fears improvisation because it appears to bypass their carefully nurtured specialisations – who is the genius, who the technical achiever now? One way through the maze seems to be being traced by the American conductor Clark Rundell, currently at the Royal Northern College of Music. Rundell educates his students in both jazz and score-reading, achieving renditions of Weill and Stravinsky and Zappa that make the distinctions seem irrelevant. The combination of weight and precision in Rundell's RNCM student orchestra sounds like a new generation genuinely impatient with the old categories. This is no longer a matter of consuming at random: this is musical potential, lives, careers.

Suppose the economy suddenly boomed, as it did in the 50s: who'd write for such ambidextrous talents (for whom the old wars – Bailey versus Boulez – are just so much history)? Some names have already been noted: Zappa, Braxton, Archer, Zorn. Add to them Hannah Kulenty, the Polish composer whose use of glissandi traces classical players into realms of improvised technique; composer/bassist Simon Fell, currently producing a mindfrug of serialism and out-bop; saxophonist Jan Kopinski with his vision of harmelodic funk and East European string dementia (the Pinski Zoo Seven); pianist Joanna MacGregor and her assault on the safe dumbness of the classical repertoire; Butch Morris and his dreamelodic refusal of both event and inattention.

These are the people that are crossing real boundaries. If you haven't heard of them, it's because they've crossed a boundary that matters. ■

GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT?



Ben Thompson looks at how rock is responding to the overstepping of one of society's deepest-rooted distinctions.

SOMETHING VERY weird is going on in the Brixton Academy toilets. On the fat-away stage, Nick Cave is moaning and grunting away in time-honoured fashion. Cave's following – like old Nick himself – is not as scurvy and unwashed as it once was, but the Gents are still not what you would call gentlemanly. There is a rather shaky bravado, though, about the ranks of expectant manhood, awaiting their turn at the wall. Marauding gangs of women have taken over the cubicles: not prepared to put up with the inordinately long wait for their own facility, they have seized the means of mictruration. Obviously, rock toilet etiquette is flexible, as anyone who has experienced the sinks at a heavy metal gig knows only too well, but it never, you can see the young men thinking, used to be *this* flexible.

The irredeemably laddish nature of Cave's oeuvre lends an added piquancy to the breaking down of gender barriers in his name (the scene has no doubt been repeated in countless more or less fitting locations, I've just never noticed it before). It's too easy to see this convenience takeover as a metaphor for expanding female participation in the pleasures of noisy guitar music, both as producers and consumers, but that is probably no reason not to so see it. If only the movement towards musical equality of opportunity and appreciation could be accomplished with as few misunderstandings and as little bad faith on the part of surprised males as the South London toilet revolution.

The ever-shinking numerical discrepancy between male and female fandom has been one of the most striking features of the massive upsurge in popular support for the sort of bands who until recently struggled to fill spaces in Polytechnic bars. The psychological impact of this on would-be elitists in the nation's sixth form common rooms must be incalculable. Where once a girl choosing to wear Doctor Marten boots or a boy with a weekly music paper habit would have been assured of their contemporaries understanding that they were social outcasts, now they are merely indulging in the normative behaviour of their juniors, as the always slightly spurious thrill of being "independent" and "alternative" has become an

entirely mainstream teenage leisure choice. This would be an exciting development, were it not for the appalling dullness of the Megacity Four/Senseless Things/Neds Atomic Dustbin/Wonderstuff/James t-shirt axis who seem to be at the centre of it. The possibility that a generation might be growing up to see rugby-tackling Philip Schofield on a TV awards show as the acme of subversion is not a happy one.

How can they rebel against this? Affecting a pure pop sensibility is not the winning gambit it once was. The sight of Bobby Gillespie and Kylie together on a magazine cover does not now provoke much more than a yawn: being subject to the same law of diminishing returns that acted on Einstürzende Neubauten's double-header with Showaddywaddy. What makes this sort of conjunction amusing is that it is so unlikely, so once it becomes a reality, it's no longer such a good idea. The festival of mould-breaking that has taken place over the last couple of years has left tomorrow's ground-breakers rather short of options.

The reliably unworldly-seeming delights of distorting Americana have so far been impressively resistant to the commercial pressures unwittingly imposed by Nirvana, but the stream of clean and refreshing American bands like Pavement and Superchunk has got to dry up sometime. That the gawky weathered noise sensibility of Neil Young could be stretched out so far seemed extraordinary when Dinosaur or even the early Meat Puppets were doing it. There just isn't

space for too much more of this kind of thing.

The more you think about it, the more rock seems in severe danger of buckling under the weight of its past, which is usually a good sign. The most appealing expressions of discontent in this regard have so far come from America. Entertainingly verbose Washingtonians The Nation Of Ulysses reject the "abhorred parent culture" of "Those who obscure their folly in a postured roll in the dung-hea of yesteryear", by that most unprecedented and revolutionary of means, the album sleeve-note. "Despised Rock and Roll anthems and self-congratulatory Woodstock eulogy smatters us senseless", they observe, "invading every orifice uninvited, reminding us at each turn what a golden age their's was - yawn - and of their ineffectual epoch". Irritable New Yorkers Cop Shoot Cop take a similar line on "Smash Retro!", from their newly available 1990 debut *Consumer Revolt*; "Sick of nostalgia for what I can't remember, feed me the past and expect me to eat it". Both of these groups read better than they sound, dramatically so in the latter case. Still, they've got a point.

Negativity is the best way forward. The best thing about the impossibility of trying to guess what will happen next is that only the people who are going to do it know, and they probably don't know they know. If you'd asked Neil Tennant and Boon eighteen months ago which one of them was more likely to put on a perfect pop spectacle, how would they have answered?



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UNDECIDEABILITY

John Corbett came all the way from Chicago to Holborn to attend the First Annual Festival of Experimental Music. These are his thoughts.

PERENNIAL PROBLEM: what to call it? Improvised music, new music, creative music, jazz, free jazz, free music, free, cutting edge, avant garde, non-idiomatic, improvisation? You know, *the* music. In a very productive round-table discussion at the London Musicians Collective's recent week-long festival—an event that was called a festival of *experimental* music—I heard yet two new suggestions: “non-hierarchical music” and “visual music”.

Think of that. Someone asks what kind of music you like and you reply: “Visual music.” (Can we buy some on record?) Or you answer: “Non-hierarchical music.” (What do we do if someone plays too loud?) What's clear is the partial and partisan nature of all these titles. Each term carries a load of connotations, provisions and proscriptions; each bears the responsibility of an exclusive and discriminating musical truth, rather than an inclusive and open-ended musical process. The 80s were a rough ride, a material deprivation of cultural production that's caused some to ask the deadly question “What is the *sense* of making this music?”, it's refreshing to know that the issue of what to call “it” is still around, and that someone still cares. But this ambivalence about naming the music—what philosopher Jean-François Lyotard might call its “undecideability”—is perhaps one of its best signs, an indication that things are happening in a broad and relatively unrestricted way.

There is no such thing as *the* music. Probably never was; certainly isn't now. What one has, at best, are *these* musics—intersecting spheres of interest and development that overlap, interpenetrate, cross-fertilize and maybe even supercede one another, but are definitely not co-extensive. Of course these spheres might be defined in terms of genre and style, but there are other categories that criss-cross the musical map.

For instance, consider the generational differences between just the British improvisers at the festival, from progenitor Derek Bailey, through LMC co-founder Steve Beresford to young pianist John Law. Or consider the developmental variability represented by the fest, younger musicians trying to settle on what kind of music to make in a general sense and older ones still working to refine their chosen path. Or how about the basic regional and geographic differences and cultural differences? And consider institutional affiliation—some musicians connected with the academy, some working in the alternative and even commercial music industries and some relatively independent of either. And how about the often bitterly disputed methodological rifts between musics—for instance between musicians who stringently adhere to impro-

visation and those who accept a dose of writing, or those who are interested in “rock” versus those who find a steady pulse immediately repugnant?

There is perhaps no better proof of the overall incommensurability of these disparate musics than their presentation in LMC's festival. A list of discussion participants alone should suffice: Charles Hayward, Vanessa Mackness, Max Eastley, Evan Parker, Clive Bell, Sylvia Haller, Ken Hyder, Lol Coxhill, Nick Couldry, Beresford and Law. No single vision, no universal language in this crowd. Ideally, there's understanding, respect and support—but not agreement, please. The LMC even brought this point home, and as a festival this was its greatest success. It tested the limits of what was presentable under the “experimental” umbrella (Peter Blegvad's sardonic pop ballads conspicuously fell outside this threshold, and he knew it). It placed a number of younger, less developed and in some cases downright unready players, like Die! Trip Computer, Die!, Orchestra Murphy and Ghosts Before Breakfast alongside artistically mature (and no less “radical” for it) innovators like Nicholas Collins, Barry Guy and John Stevens. Shamelessly eclectic, it commingled musics coming out of jazz with rock, electronics and dance, and it brought together English, Mongolian, German, American, Japanese and Belgian men and women... Artistically, the festival's high points were dizzying indeed, while its troughs were unexpectedly deep. As I see it, this all seems to reflect a healthy scene, a really vigorous, adventurous and perhaps expanding cross-section (good audiences, too). As an American, it makes me rather envious. Coordinator Ed Baxter should be proud of the “first” (some ex-LMC organizers were surprised to learn) annual festival of these musics, whatever they be called.

Still, following percussionist Roger Turner's wise words—“What do you mean you can't complain?”—I'll make the following comments on the fest's flaws, problems that are the rule rather than the exception in the presentation of adventurous music in places from the Knitting Factory to the Total Music Meeting. First, there needs to be a sympathetic, attentive person running the sound. If there's going to be any music during the breaks (maybe better not) it should be very different from the music it surrounds, and much quieter. Likewise, if there's going to be an emcee or announcer, they should be loud enough to focus the attention of the audience.

Also, in a fest that made a conspicuous effort to promote dialogue over the music, to make a forum for new ideas and new players (including day-long open jams on a separate

EXPERIMENTS IN VISION

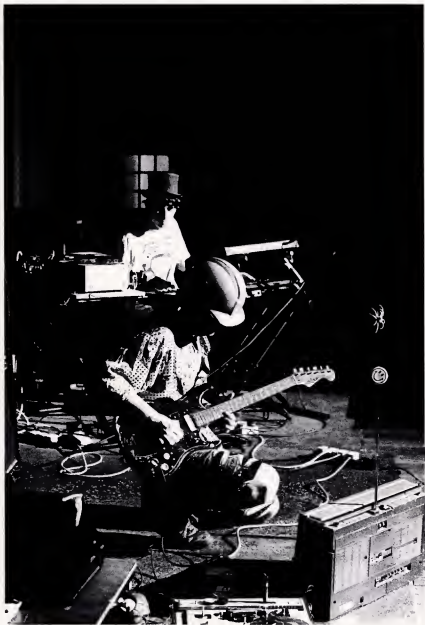
stage), I found it very off-putting to have to leave immediately after the last sound left the stage. Talking about the music afterwards is an underrated part of the experience, and I missed it. These are the elements that frame the music, and in an environment hoping to foster self-determination and autonomy, where musicians are no longer pawns in some bigger game, the elements that the musicians still have no control over. ■

The Conway Hall off Red Lion Square hosted the LMC's First Annual Festival of Experimental Music from 20-24 May. Ž.V. Vasović was there to capture what went down.



David Sawyer and Lou Gare

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Die! Trip Computer, Die!

30WIRE



Barry Guy and Vanessa Mackness



John Stevens and Derek Bailey ■



flotation mark

S'EXPRESS CLAIRVOYANT MARK MOORE GAZES INTO DEVIANT DISCO'S CRYSTAL BALL. LOUISE GRAY IS THE TALL DARK STRANGER. DOMINIC TURNER TAKES HIS CAMERA ON AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY.

IT WASN'T so much a conscious decision to effect so dramatic a change, more of a feeling; his instincts told him that it was the right one to make. His instincts he indicates by the light blow of his fists hitting against his rib cage. The feeling, one of detached, sedate floating, is expressed by fingers (extraordinarily long, manicured Manchu fingers) spread wide beside his head. This is Mark Moore, not so much explaining as illustrating his decision to become a floating head.

And he has. Accompanied by the head of his vocalist Sonique Clarke, he and she float serenely across the sleeve of S'Express' second album, *Intercourse*. Their portraitist, London-based artist Sarah Gregory, places them in a calm landscape that, despite vivid colours, owes more to surrealism than psychedelia. A sky of eyes watches the two benevolently.

"It's about getting rid of the ego and being one with the Godhead . . . The heads are me and Sonique slimmed down on a special diet of egg and bacon to a state of pure essence," Moore jokes, finally, about the image, reluctant to engage in a little associative thinking. He mentions that the heads in both *Baron Munchausen* movies were, sketchily, an inspiration. But no matter: associations will always be made. Right now, on the eve of the release of *Intercourse*, it's these tangential things that are interesting.





IN REAL life, of course, Mark Moore also has a body, and all phantasies of disembodiment aside, he's very much of this earth. The DJ and studio musician behind S'Express, Moore is a man, who, when the history of club music comes to be written, will have his own chapter, and not simply because he's successful. An A-list DJ since 1986, he played London's trendiest venues from Philip Sailon's Mud Club to (with techno impresario Colin Faver) Asylum (later Pyramid), Britain's first house music night, held at Heaven. He was influential years before he started making records. These were the years that a new, discernible DJ culture was emerging and moving from club turntables to the recording studios. MARRS' *Pump Up The Volume*, Bomb The Bass' *Beat Ds* and S'Express' *Theme From S'Express* were all important British examples of the new compositional techniques. At the time, their methods – a cut 'n' mix bricolage enabled by sampling technology – were revolutionary. Yet, of all the early promise shown by the DJ-musicians, only a few have been moved to consider any more complex procedures of composition. In Britain, it's Moore that stands out.

His life story reads like the dream bio-pic film-treatment. Born in London ("One starry night, not so very long ago" – even Moore's closest friends don't know his exact age) to a Korean mother and an English father, he ran away from his Suffolk boarding school at 13 to a London convulsing under the first onslaught of punk. He lived in squats with prostitutes who mothered him and made sure he sat some O levels. He nursed an unrequited love for Siouxsie Sioux and started a lifetime habit of going to every club worth visiting, absorbing that disparate ethos.

His most familiar guise today is as leader of S'Express, a band-cum-gang that spring, fully armed, from the night clubs of London onto vinyl in 1988. Their first single (for feisty independents Rhythm King Records), "Theme from S'Express", a sampled collage overlaid with an insistent house beat, went to number one within two weeks of release. The follow-up, "Superfly Guy", went to number five; but the third, "Hey Music Lover" (variation on a theme by Sly Stone) found an entirely different audience – Philip Glass remixed it. The debut album, *Original Soundtrack*, lapped up critical acclaim; further singles – "Mantra For A State Of Mind", "Noting To Lose", the Bobbie Gentry cover "Find 'Em, Fool 'Em, Forget 'Em" (updated recently for re-release) – only confirmed the gang/band's position.

A shifting personnel has also enhanced their vitality. Of the original three S'Express girls, Chilo is singing jazz ("Very far underground," Moore says), Linda Love is modelling and Michelle Ndrika is pursuing a new career: the black Kylie.

("She plans to deny all knowledge of S'Express," Moore laughs, delighted). For the past two years, Moore's vocalist and (increasingly) collaborator has been Sonique. A former sprint champion, Sonique had had a minor soul hit years before with "Let Me Hold You", a Chrysalis-released single. She and Moore had met at Trip (the West End club that brought acid house to the masses) in 1988, but her induction into S'Express was novel. "Mark said we have to rave together for three months, to see whether we'd get on. That's what we did. Truly."

CHART SUCCESS, money and *Top Of The Pops* appearances aren't, truthfully speaking, the stuff of club music. In that night-time world, influence is measured by invitations to remix other people's work, or else by how you yourself get copied and sampled. *Intercourse*, Moore readily admits, is S'Express's most complex release to date, counterpointed noise and syncretized rhythms creating a vertical dimension hitherto unheard of in dance music.

"Whereas *Original Soundtrack* experimented more with space and minimalism, on this one we put our Phil Spector hat on for a few of the tracks. One of my favourite records is 'Be My Baby' by the Ronettes: total wall of noise insanity, fabulous. The original version of 'Find 'Em' is definitely Spector-meets-S'Express, all these layers building into this big wall of sound. I don't think people were ready for that sort of thing."

If S'Express's musical eloquence owes much to Moore's encyclopaedic knowledge of pop history, it's also a rare knowledge. As the club scene has got larger, it has also become unwieldy. There is no longer any collective knowledge. Colin Faver recently noted how young techno fans aren't even aware of Kraftwerk. With such intense specialisation occurring in each genre, not many know enough to have an overview and it's perhaps a reason for the simultaneous closeness and distance that link and separate S'Express from other bands.

"Two years ago, some people may have thought S'Express had techno longings, and in parts they'd have been right. But what is techno today? Hardcore? It's probably a long lost cousin who turns up at your house wearing a bobble hat, sucking a dummy and carrying a face mask and a Vicks Sinex Spray . . . Oh, didn't you know? They all have those gas masks now: the combination of Vicks, mask and . . . er . . . other things enhances the buzz."

"I'd said that S'Express take to all forms of dance music. At any type of club (unless it's one of those poxy places that don't know their music), I'd say I'm welcomed. All of them, from garage and hardcore to the more melodic techno where Andy Wetherall and Phil Perry play. I guess S'Express seem like this weird urchin child come to visit."

"On Sundays, I go to Linford Studios (in South London) where there's a ragga rave; that's hardcore break beats with a bassline and a vocal going *ragga dang wa dang wugga dang ding*. They play records like SL2's 'On A Ragga Tip', which was in

the charts recently, but the favourite tune down there is "Bad Boy! Bad Boy!" At least, that's what I think it's called. When it comes on, the whole audience go *oooooh, ooooooh*. All the security staff wear bullet-proof vests 'cos they're always having guns pulled on them. I feel comfortable there. It makes a nice change."

But similarities? "I think the only other band working in a similar way to us is A Man Called Adam. Their album, *The Apple*, is the album of the century. It had lyrics; in all its terms and references it was ahead of its time. Of course, it didn't get the exposure it deserved."

Of course. Which is perhaps another reason that S'Express are using their position to start pushing club music in new directions. *Intercourse* is, Moore avers, "listener friendly", not just a collection of twelve-inch dance mixes (for those, there will be a limited number of DJ records pressed up). More unusually, the album focuses on songs, rather than epic sweeps of sound, with a particular emphasis on lyrics. For the first time in S'Express's career, the release comes complete with lyric sheet. Verses and choruses are intercut with explanations to the listening audience: *Sonique makes strange noises while dancing and fluttering her light brown eyes*. Or: *Various groanings from Sonique*. Even: *Sonique is just SOOO JAZZ in this bit*.

Modestly: "We wanted lyrics that would make people think, that would say what we wanted to say with a certain amount of humour without being preachy."

The result is a sly, witty collection of songs that are simultaneously touching for their insight and consideration. "Nothing To Lose" is "a stand against conformity, it's anti-apathy". "Nervous Motion" moves between a fear of AIDS and a fear of all contact. "Trumpets" deals with lies, deceit and obstructed communication. "Supersonic Lover" ("I met a boy from Cirrus B/he was seriously in love with me") has an alien dressed in radical chic and the movie motif of "Twinkle" ("Oh my Godard, baby!") serves up a different form of alienated love. Sex, lies, videotapes? Well, it is a very far cry from the prevalent club mantras: *get right on one, matey, baby, ecstasy, yeah*.

HOWEVER *INTERCOURSE* is critically received is, in one way, not the point. Moore and S'Express have been for too long at the innovative edge of club music for the album's impact to go unnoticed. Will it provoke a rash of "serious" dance/songs in its wake? Probably; though by then, it's possible that S'Express will have moved further in another direction (one such journey maybe a visit to campy disco ravesville courtesy Fluffy Toy IQ, due for release on Moore's own Splish label).

And after? "It's crystal ball time," says Moore, undecided yet. "If music was a universe, we'd be something like Space Family Robinson, whizzing around, moving, never caught in one orbit."

Forever floating?

"That too," he smiles. ■

SMALL JAZZ GROUPS - Artistic Development

Grants are available for activity which aids the artistic development of small (maximum twelve members) jazz or improvised music groups. Such activity could include touring, rehearsal or a 'sabbatical' period to explore new ideas/techniques. Full-time students are not eligible.

Applications, from groups of the highest artistic standard only, should be submitted with clear details of the proposed activity, including detailed budgets, press cuttings, and a demo tape where appropriate. Awards are unlikely to be more than £3,000.

The deadline for receipt of applications is August 17th 1992. Quote reference SG/DEV.

LATIN JAZZ - Touring

Funds are available to support touring in 1992-3 by bands playing Latin-style jazz. Tours should include at least ten dates in England, covering several areas of the country.

Applications are invited from bands, their representatives or tour organisers, and should detail proposed venues and timing, and be accompanied by a full budget, a demo tape, and copies of reviews, photos and publicity material.

Awards are targeted at the shortfall between reasonable expenditure (including fees) and income.

The deadline for receipt of applications is August 17th 1992. Quote reference LJ/TOUR.

LARGE SCALE JAZZ - Touring

Applications for funds to support jazz touring in England are invited from tour organisers/promoters. Proposals should be of direct benefit to British-based musicians (but may involve overseas artists, as part of a multi-artist package), and should give good coverage of all regions in larger (600-plus capacity) venues. They can relate to single tours, or to a programme of tours over a longer period. Preference will be given to proposals which make use of commercial sponsorship, which are musically innovative, and which reach new audiences as well as existing fans.

Applications should include full details of artists, proposed itinerary, budgets (including sponsorship if applicable), marketing plans, tapes of relevant releases, etc. A total of £33,000 is available, and is likely to be split between no more than three projects.

Detailed proposals should be received by August 17th 1992. Quote reference BIG/TOUR.

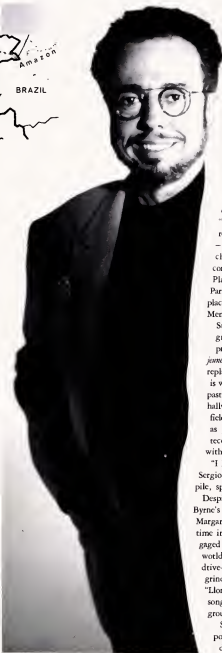
Applications (typed only, please) and any enquiries should be addressed to: Martin Scott, Music Department, Arts Council of Great Britain, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ.

Arts Council



A BRAZILIAN IN PARIS

*Sergio Mendes
made
a million
in Latin MOR
— but on
his newest
record he's
returned to
his roots: all
of them.
Tony
Herrington
soaks up the
corporate
hospitality.*



EVEN IF you ignore all the available evidence — missing chart positions, sales "up" into three figures, cancelled tours and recording contracts, media and public ennuui — and still maintain that World Music, that charlatan genre, has status as an international commercial proposition, nevertheless, the Plaza Athénée hotel off the Champs Elysées in Paris's eighth *arrondissement* remains an unlikely place to find a musician like Brazil's Sergio Mendes.

Surely such an establishment's spectacularly gross opulence should be the last exclusive preserve of a fading European aristocracy, the *jennete dorée* (or, at the very least, its modern day replacement, the pan-global rock star). But this is where Sergio Mendes has been living for the past two days, luxuriating in the cool, marble hallways and dramatic, sweeping stairwells, fielding questions from 19 European journalists as part of the promotion drive for his new record, *Brasilero*, his first since signing with WEA Elektra early last year.

"I like to enjoy the good things in life," says Sergio, gesturing casually around the deep pile, split-level suite. "So this is nice."

Despite *Rhythms Of The Samba*, despite David Byrne's *Rei Momo* and *Beleza Tropical*, despite Margaret Menezes and Marisa Monte, the only time in recent years that Brazilian music has engaged with the Anglo world — the real Anglo world of downmarket newspapers, low-brow TV, drive-time radio — has been through the bump 'n' grind sensationalism of the lambada (except that "Llorando Se Fue" was a version of a Bolivian song recorded in Paris by the European studio group Kaoma).

So it's a little perplexing to find Elektra pouting all the resources of their international division into the promotion of a record that

is effectively a series of field recordings from Rio and Salvador filtered through the digital ambience of LA's Castle Oaks and Smoke Tree studios and the mixing abilities of Bruce Swedien, best known for his work with Michael Jackson and Quincy Jones.

"Their attitude has surprised me," agrees Sergio. "For me this album represents a dream come true. I've always wanted to do something totally Brazilian. That is my country, my culture. But I know that the business side sometimes doesn't think that way. They say, give us something we are familiar with, that we can sell, that will fit our formats. But when I presented the idea to Elektra they loved it. I explained to them that it was going to take time and money. I would have to spend a lot of time in Brazil. But they said go and do it. I think the company is very excited that I am starting my career with them with something very unique, sincere, authentic."

Sincerity and authenticity are elusive qualities even for Third World musicians and certainly for First World multi-corporate structures. But they are the strategies upon which Elektra are basing their selling of *Brasileiro*. The facts were in evidence at the album's Paris launch party, where a presentation speech by Elektra president Bob Krasnow - full of positive projections, corporate bonhomie, staff motivation and invocations of the integrity of the product - was framed with performances by a group of Rio *sambistas* and wide-screen videos of Bahian *capoeira* practitioners. Sincerity? Authenticity? At least one member of the Elektra delegation remained hardened in his attitude towards this combination of high art and low commerce. "What a load of bullshit," was the verdict of the man from the company's Dutch office.

DOES *BRASILEIRO* warrant such attention and outcry? Well, in a career that stretches back to the late 50s, it's probably Mendes' best record yet. Researched and recorded over 12 months in Rio, Salvador and Los Angeles, the record's 14 tracks work as stylistic, idiomatic and geographic collision points. Mendes uses songs by composers with a variety of affiliations, prejudices and emphases: the multi-instrumentalist Hermeto Pascoal; ex-Pat Metheny collaborator Ivan Lins; the brilliant guitarist João Bosco; and the young Bahian singer Carlinhos Brown, last heard on Bill Laswell's *Bahia Black* project.

Mendes uses these basic song forms to graft together a rich mosaic of music from Brazil and North America: street sambas, *samba canção* and *batucadas* from Rio and São Paulo; the thundering percussion of the Afro-Bloc *Vai Quem Vem*; Afro-Bahian rhythm - and song forms like *baião*, *embolada*, *afixo*, *ijexa* (and by implication, the dances, drum patterns and chants of their antecedents in the Angolan *candomblé* and *umbanda* religious ceremonies and gatherings); recent idiosyncratic developments within Brazilian music like the Anglo-Bahian rap of singer Carmen Alice and the roving Trios Elétricos of the Salvador carnival, which gave birth to groups like Banda Reflexu's and Obina Shock; those groups' subse-

quent and hugely popular samba-reggae hybrids (also heard in the recordings of Gilberto Gil and Margareth Menezes); mainstream US R'n'B and the consummate professionalism of US studio veterans like Nathan East and Paul Jackson Jr.; the whole West Coast Cali-Brazilian crossover tradition that goes back to Herbie Hancock, Bill Summers, Azar Lawrence and others; references to the "naturalist" compositions of 20s composer Hector Villa-Lobos; the disco samba (*samba*) of the late Clara Nunes; *farro* from the country's North Eastern interior; 70s and 80s Tropical pop and *salandade*, the high, yearning, Portuguese *fado*-derived quality latent in the melodies of songs by Gil, Caetano Veloso and Gal Costa. The borrowings, overlaps and cross-fertilisations go on and on. (As did that sentence - Ed.)

As a Brazilian who has lived and worked in Los Angeles for the last 25 years, Mendes has both an intuitive and intellectual grasp of these found materials. On paper, *Brasileiro*'s tracks break down into isolated fragments; arbitrary and discontinuous. On record, they coalesce into organic, wide-screen pieces of music; flowing, seamless, coherent.

"When I started work on the album," Mendes explains, "I had many ideas. The percussion element is very important in Brazilian music and I wanted to show the variety of rhythms, styles and textures than we have down there."

"The sounds during carnival in Rio, on the street, that's a huge, massive sound that doesn't occur anywhere else. It's an incredible pulse. So I brought together 100 guys from various samba schools like Mangueira, Portela, Beija-Flor, and recorded them in a Rio car park."

"That's how the project started. From there I went to Salvador in Bahia in the North East. I met guys down there like *Vai Quem Vem* who showed me a different kind of percussion, very Afro rooted. In Bahia, the African element is much stronger than anywhere else in Brazil. Maybe if you look at the map it's because it's closer to the African continent. Rio is a much more cosmopolitan city. It offers a different kind of songwriting, there's more of a European influence. Again, if you go north to Recife, there's some incredible rhythms up there (*frevo*, *maracatu*) that don't even exist in Bahia."

"When I was in Bahia I sat with some old friends like Hermeto and Ivan and I met new guys like Carlinhos. They played me songs, we talked, swapped ideas, thought about the various styles I could use. That's how it went for about six months. I took my time because I wanted to let things develop naturally. People started coming round to my house, playing me music. I met a young composer, Guinga, who is actually a dentist by profession, and he played me some beautiful tunes."

"I made a lot of tape and I used most of what I heard but in terms of source, richness, there's still so much that remains untapped down there."

"When I brought the tapes back to LA I wasn't really thinking about using American musicians. I remember playing [drummer] Jeffrey Porcato a version of 'Indiádo' [a booming samba-reggae track in the style of Reflexu's ground-breaking

SERGIO MENDES

"Madagascar Olodum"] and he thought he could do something with it. So it wasn't planned. It was an intuitive thing.

"But it was important that the American guys added to the music, rather than mutilate or dilute it. But that wasn't so hard because Anglo musicians are more open now. 25 years ago I can remember US drummers struggling to play bossa nova. Now you can find guys who can handle it. Not the percussion so much. That belongs in one place. You can't transpose musicians like the guys I used from the samba schools. If I'd flown them into LA to record I wouldn't have got the same performances that I got out of them by recording them in their own environment."

FOR MENDES, the success of the loose, open-ended approach to the making of *Brasiliero* is there for all to see in the opening track "Fanfarras".

"That was one of the tunes we recorded in the car park. The rhythm is very carnival, very carioca. I tried to write a tune to go over the rhythm with João Bosco but we couldn't find anything to fit. Then when I went to Bahia I played the tapes to Carlinhos. He immediately played this little Afro-Bahian chant that fitted perfectly. I had to travel two hundred miles to find that one melody but it was worth it. It worked."

The kind of complex configurations and syntheses in evidence in *Brasiliero* have long been endemic to Brazilian music. In the 20s the poet Oswald de Andrade, author of the influential modernist *Antropofagia Manifesto* coined the term *antropofagia* to identify and encourage this consumption and regurgitation by Brazilian artists of external cultural experiences from Africa, America, Europe and their own indigenous Indian populations. Those ideas were picked up by a new generation of artists in the 60s, most notably by the *tropicalismo* movement led by musicians like Gil, Veloso and Maria Bethânia.

Gil has written that during the 60s Brazilian cities "were very much like London, Paris, New York or LA – there was an atmosphere of experimentation, of freedom, of counterculture." He also noted that even growing up in a small town in the North Eastern *sertão* (rural interior), the range of music available to him was spectacular; Italian and German polkas and *schottisches*, Portuguese *fado*, Mexican boleros, Southern Mediterranean songforms, jazz, Cuban mambos, European classical music as well as all the localised hybrids and distortions of samba, *choro* and *forró*.

Mendes himself grew up in the teeming metropolis of Rio, where the outside influences were even more pervasive.

"I grew up going to the movies, listening to jazz, Sinatra, Cole Porter tunes. I was very exposed to the Anglo world from Hollywood to drinking Coca Cola. But I was also exposed to European culture – Stravinsky, Ravel, painters like Magritte and Matisse. And of course there was all the music on the streets, the sambas and *batucadas*, and in the cafes there would be *choristas* – small chamber groups playing, conservatory music but on Brazilian instruments.

"FOR ME THIS ALBUM REPRESENTS A DREAM COME TRUE. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO SOMETHING TOTALLY BRAZILIAN. THAT IS MY COUNTRY, MY CULTURE. BUT I KNOW THAT THE BUSINESS SIDE SOMETIMES DOESN'T THINK THAT WAY."

"I used to have a group of friends – artists, poets, musicians – and we were living our own little tropical bohemian scene. We used to fantasize about the Café de Flore in Paris, where Hemingway used to drink and Modigliani got stoned and jumped in the Seine. Or Charlie Parker getting smoked in New York. We lived that life, that great bohemian fantasy of trying to understand the experience of those great artists in their own time and environment."

In the late 50s Sergio played piano, accompanying singers, in the cafes and bars of Rio and São Paulo. This is where he first met Hermeto Pascoal, then a young accordion player fresh from the North East. In the early 60s he formed the Bossa Rio Sextet, which also included the future Weather Report percussionist Dom Um Romão. Alongside The Tamba Trio and Samba Canção Trio, Bossa Rio were one of the first and best instrumental bossa nova groups, recording songs by Antonio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto and providing the backing for Herbie Mann and Cannonball Adderley on two of the best records to emerge from the Anglo-Brazilian jazz bossa movement. Sergio recalls the period as "a very fruitful time for Brazilian music. Great musicians and wonderful songs."

In 1962 he travelled to New York for the sessions that would produce the album with Adderley and, at the height of the US bossa fixation, stayed to appear at Carnegie Hall with Stan Getz and João and Astrud Gilberto and in sessions at the Village Vanguard with Mann, Bud Shank and Charlie Byrd. In 1965 he moved to LA and a year later, in what proved to be a pivotal moment, signed with Herb Alpert's new A&M label and formed Brazil '66.

The nature of Brazil '66's music – lightweight Anglo-Latin versions of songs by The Beatles, Henry Mancini, Burt Bacharach and Simon & Garfunkel – has parallels with the careers of many US-based Latin musicians, from Mongo Santamaria and Ray Barretto to Alpert himself, seeking to connect with the other Anglo world of fame, money, prestige and recognition. The group's phenomenal success – sales of four million for their version of The Beatles "Fool On The Hill" alone, a US No. 1 with "Mas Que Nada" – couldn't help but dictate the course of Mendes's music over the next 25 years.

"I had a lot of fun during those years," says Mendes. "My approach has always been based on the fact that if I hear a song and think that I can bring something new to it then I will play it. I remember listening to the *Magical Mystery Tour* album in

Acapulco and hearing 'Fool On The Hill'. It was such a beautiful melody. I knew it would be a huge hit. Many of the songs I covered in that period weren't from my culture, it was more a case of me bringing these foreign elements into my Latin thing and creating something new."

IT WOULD be easy in the wake of *Rhythm Of The Saints* and the current, if rather marginalised, deeper media interest in the Afro-Bahian *Afoxé* movement, to take a cynical view over the impulses that motivated Mendez to make a record like *Brasileiros* at this late stage in his career. But he's been here before, as early as 1971 in fact, when he recorded the *Primal Roots* album, an early, low-budget entry into the World Music aesthetic. He repeated the exercise 17 years later with *Arara*, by which time such First World attempts to colour the familiar and mundane with the exotic and extraneous had become commonplace.

"The need was the same, to make something that reflected my Brazilian roots," says Mendes. "The difference with the new album is the extent of the project and the support of the record company. I recorded *Primal Roots* in two weeks in the backyard of my house in LA. At the time A&M said, how are we going to handle this? They weren't used to dealing with music outside of the mainstream. But that was then. Today everything is more integrated. Like in Brazil, the most popular music right now is Country & Western. Not American C&W but Brazilian C&W. Heavy metal, rap, rock and roll, that's all a part of the reality of young people's lives down there.

"In the same way the attraction of the Anglo world for Latin music is increasing. In the 60s, the whole bossa nova thing was a good example of that, American musicians integrating into a different culture and finding new sources of inspiration. I'm sure that's what motivated Simon and Byrne to do their things. It's encouraging people to listen to music that they otherwise wouldn't have been exposed to. In America and Europe, radio and TV are now more open and willing to play music that is outside their usual formula."

As I prepare to take my leave of Sergio, news comes in that MTV Europe "like the video" for the album's first single "Indadido". Jacqueline, WEA International's indefatigable press officer, is confident that a playlisting won't be far behind. Sergio leans back into the upholstery. "Excellent news," he smiles.

Back at the launch party, however, opinion is polarised on *Brasileiros*' potential for major crossover success. The man from the Italian office is happy that the record will ship major units on the back of the success of *The Mambo Kings* movie and soundtrack. But the Dutch delegation remain sceptical. "Radio isn't interested. DJs won't play it. James, Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, that's what young people in Holland want to listen to, not some old Brazilian guy who has been around for 30 years. Where's the appeal in that?" ■

NEW NOTE FORTHCOMING — RELEASES —

AHIM
Kenny Wheeler/Kayak AHIM 912 - CD
Featuring: Julian Argüelles, Stan Sulzmann, John Taylor, Peter Erskine a.o. Recorded May 1992

CONCORD
Scott Hamilton * Ken Papeowski * Spike Robinson/Groovin' High
CCD 4509 - CD CJ 595C
With: Howard Alden, Gerry Wiggins, Dave Stone, Jake Hanna

GO JAZZ
Phil Upchurch/Whatever Happened To The Blues VBR 20662 - CD
Featuring: Jack McDuff, Massey Parker, Fred Wesley, Pee Wee Ellis, Pops & Mavis Staples a.o.

Georgia Fenne/"The Blues And Me" VBR 21042 - CD
Featuring: Mike Manieri, Ronnie Cuber, Stanley Turrentine, Phil Woods, Grady Tate a.o.

INTUITION
Lazaro Ros & Mazza/Cantelo INT 30692 - CD
Lazaro Ros - vocals with Mazza (Cuba's Most Popular Fusion Band)

Mika Theodorakis/Zorba - The Ballet INT 31032 - CD
Original orchestral version composed and conducted by Mika Theodorakis.

NYC
Steps Ahead/Yin-Yang NYC 60011 - LP NYC 60012 - CD
Featuring: Mike Manieri, Bendik, Steve Smith, Steve Kahn, Chuck Loeb a.o.

CHESKY
Sara K./Closer Than They Appear JD 67 - CD
Featuring: Sara K - vocals and 4 string quartet, Bruce Dunlap - guitar a.o.

Various Artists/The Best Of Chesky Jazz, Vol.2 JD 68 - CD
Featuring: Sara K, McCoy Tyner, Pasquale D'Riversa, Phil Woods, Tom Harrell a.o.

KING
Michael White/No Rules KJCJ 82 - CD
Featuring: Michael White - drums, Michael Paulo, John Bassary, Eric Gale a.o.

TIMELESS
Lenny Andrade/Embraceable You CDSJP 365 - CD
Brazilian influenced standards album with Latino musicians.

TIMELESS (BLUES)
John Slaughter Blues Band/A New Coat Of Paint CDSJP 313 - CD
With: Paul Cox - vocals, John Bescham - trombone, Nick Payne & Andy Hamilton - sax, John Slaughter - guitars

BULLSEYE BLUES
Ann Peebles/Full Time Love NETCD 9515 - CD
Feat. The Memphis Horns, Hi Rhythm Section & Special Guests.
Otis Clay/I'll Treat You Right QDDB 9529 - CD
Feat. The Memphis Horns, Hi Rhythm Section & Special Guests.

LA CALIFUSA 652791 - CD
Feat: Bill Labounty - vocals, piano, Steve Gadd, David Sanborn, Pat Austin a.o.

SKYRANCH
Go To Blazes/Love Lust & Trouble SR 552310 - CD
Four piece Philadelphia blues, rockabilly, surf band.

Guitar Slim Jr./The Story Of My Life SR 552311 - CD
Feat. Guitar Slim Jr - guitar, vocal, Rene Coman - bass guitar, Jon Cleary - piano, a.o.

Marva Wright/Heartbreakin' Woman SR 552307 - CD
Feat. Marva Wright - vocals, Bill Dillon - guitar, Ronald Jones - drums, piano, Darryl Johnson - bass a.o.

Marc Benno/Take It Back To Texas SR 552303 - CD
Feat. Marc Benno - vocals, guitar, Danny Freeman - piano, alida guitar, Jim Millan - bass a.o.

The Sleemound Hunters/Private Jangle SR 552302 - CD
Feat. Mark Dalton - bass, Louis X, Engler - vocals, guitar, Kim Field - vocals, harmonica a.o.

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Philip Watson talks to sax-craftsman Joe Henderson. He loves Joe's music – does that make this a puff-piece?

JOE HENDERSON casually takes a cigarette from his pack, lights it slowly, and watches it burn between his long, slim, elegant fingers. His air is studious, thoughtful; he looks comfortable and at home in the vaguely drawing room-like interior of his plush London hotel lounge. As he draws hard on the filter, the cigarette seems to give him a quiet dissenter's demeanour. With his scholarly spectacles, greying beard and avuncular smile, it seems an appealingly distracting incongruity.

"This is one habit that I don't really appreciate and I'm trying to deal with it," he confesses. His voice has a deep, dark bass to it and is lightly rasped by a lifetime with tobacco. "Photographers always used to ask me to hold a cigarette or blow some smoke for a picture, but I got sensitive about that. About ten years ago I decided 'no photos with tobacco' and I'm very strict about that."

It might sound angry, dogmatic even, but it's delivered softly with, as in all Henderson's pronouncements, verbal and musical, great dignity. He says it with a benevolent tone, his dark eyes swimming with wisdom behind his glasses.

"And you wait – I'm going to get this guy," he says, breaking out into a broad smile, "this isn't going to last. Next time you see me I'm going to be through with this guy."

THESE DAYS, it's unlikely that wait will have to be too long. As his standing and stature within jazz have improved over the last few years, Henderson has become an increasingly regular visitor to these shores. And he has almost, along with Sonny Rollins, become himself the recognised, progressive state of the tenor saxophone in jazz, and not simply because the success of his mid-80s, two-volume live trio set, *The State of the Tenor* has led to such an association.

A statesman of the instrument, and a master craftsman unrelentingly devoted to the creative challenges within the art of improvisation, Henderson has experienced a sea change of reappraisal and rediscovery over recent years. Just ten years ago

NEW NOTE FORTHCOMING — RELEASES —

CTI
Ernie Watts with Gilberto Gil/Afoxé R2 79479 – CD
Featuring: Jack DeJohnette, Eddie Gomez, Marcus Miller, Kenny Kirkland.

Charles Fambrough/The Proper Angle R2 79476 – CD
Featuring: Branford Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Roy Hargrove, Jerry Gonzalez.

Chrome/Music On The Edge R2 79475 – CD
Featuring: Bob Berg, Randy Brecker, Dennis Chambers, Mike Stern.

Rhythmstick/Rhythmstick R2 79477 – CD
Featuring: Dizzy Gillespie, Phil Woods, Charlie Haden, John Scofield.

Jim Baerd/Song Of The Sun R2 79478 – CD
Featuring: Michael Brecker, Wayne Shorter, Victor Bailey, Dennis Chambers.

TRILOKA
Jai Uttal/Footprints 3201832 – CD
Featuring: Jai Uttal – guitar, percussion, vocals, Don Cherry – pocket trumpet, Lakshmi Shankar – vocals.

Freddie Redd/Live At The Studio Grill 3201822 – CD
With: Freddie Redd – piano, Al McKibbin – bass, Billy Higgins – drums.

Jackie McLean Quintet/Dynesty 3201812 – CD
With: Rene McLean – tenor + soprano sax, flute, Hotep Idris Gelete – piano, Net Reeves – bass, Carl Allen – drums.

Richie Bairach/Soma Other Time R2 18102 – CD
Featuring: Michael Brecker, Randy Brecker, John Scofield.

GO JAZZ
Ban Sidran/A Good Travel Agent VBR 20952 – CD
Featuring: Phil Woods, Steve Miller, Ricky Peterson.

Ban Sidran/Heat Wave VBR 20952 – CD
Featuring: Ricky Peterson, Steve Miller, Dr. John.

Ban Sidran/Enivre D'Amour VBR 20972 – CD
Featuring: Bob Malach, Ricky Peterson, Pepper Adams.

MUSE
Don Petterson/The Genius Of The B3 MCD 5443 – CD
Recorded 1972 with: Eddie Daniels – sax, Ted Dumber – guitar, Freddie Watts – drums.

Hank Jones/Bop Redux MCD 5444 – CD
Recorded 1977 with: George Duvivier – bass, Ben Riley – drums.

Clifford Jordan/Highest Mountain MCD 5445 – CD
Recorded 1975 with: Cedar Walton, Sam Jones, Billy Higgins.

Deve Pike/Times Out Of Mind MCD 5446 – CD
Recorded 1975 featuring: Tom Rainier – piano, Ted Hawke – drums, Kenny Burrell – guitar.

LIPSTICK
Cherlie Mariano & Jesper van't Hof/Innuendo LIP 89002 – CD
With: Charlie Mariano – saxophones, Jasper van't Hof – piano & synthesizer, Marilyn Mazur – drums & percussion.

CALLIGRAPH RECORDS
Humphrey Lyttelton & Acker Bilk/At Sundown! CLGCD 027 – CD ZCLG 027 – MC
With: Dave Cliff – guitar, David Green – bass, Bobby Worth – drums.

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JOE HENDERSON

he might well have been dismissed as just another journeyman player, a saxophonist travelling his own hard bop and post-bop paths to little avail. The write-up in Joachim Berendt's *The Jazz Book* (1982), for example, is fairly cursory, Henderson's influence being reduced to his "leading the great bop tradition exemplarily into the jazz of the post-Coltrane era".

Yet he now suddenly enjoys an elevated position of almost impervious supremacy. Few musicians, let alone saxophonists, enjoy such widespread praise, regard and respect – especially from fellow musicians. Joe Henderson represents the touchstone of improvisational resourcefulness, a role model for anyone who has ever attempted to practice the art of the melodic solo. And it's almost as if, in the reformed neo-classical jazz arena, the mainstream has rediscovered him, as if his very singular musical path suddenly had come in tune with the times.

For in these days of being serious about your craft, of Marsalis-like practice and dedication, Henderson brings to his music (and, for that matter, to the way he approaches most things in his life, from smoking to thinking) a dignity, a determination, most of all a supreme elegance. His compositions, his selection of unusual tunes and his melodic and harmonic gifts have a graceful sophistication to them, a veneer of refinement, a polish.

On stage too he exudes a stately control. Appearing to full houses at London's Jazz Cafe recently with his own trio of Renée Rosnes (p), Larry Grenadier (b) and Al Foster (d), Henderson seemed more on top of his instrument than ever. Feet close together, body relaxed but anchored, he holds his buffed Selmer out into the spotlight, his head bowed gently as if lost behind the music in reverential humility. After a solo he moves back slowly to the rear of the stage, holding his horn up high, keeping it in his mouth, almost a cipher for a higher communication.

Nonetheless, he combines this selfless dedication with a very personal level of self-expression. On a much speeded up

version of his classic Latin shuffle "Blue Bossa", he displays all the hallmark majesty and oblique architectural capability that have been present in his playing from his very first Blue Note recordings in the early 60s.

Not only has his raw, burnished, gruff and breathy tone been gilded into a warmer and more rounded sound over the years, but the melodic and thematic improvisational possibilities he squeezes out of a tune become ever more inspired. He is constantly adherent to the principle of jazz as the sound of surprise.

SOMETIMES HE'LL start a solo off with a single repeated note played against and off the rhythm in staccato punches and legato rolls. But then he'll launch off, turning and stretching the harmonic permutations of the composition inside, outside and upside down. He has a peerless ability to really *build* a solo, to make it work logically in terms of reference points, ideas, development and climax. It's a combination of technique and invention that has taken Henderson 55 years to perfect.

"There was a time when I was very mechanical about soloing," he says. "I can remember Pepper Adams turning me on to a writer called Henry Robinson who once wrote a sentence in one of his books that spanned about four pages. It was incredible; he used all the mechanics of writing – semi-colons, colons, commas, hyphens, brackets, quotations inside quotations – to keep the sentence going for as long as possible.

"I used to try to do that in my solos. I would play the most meaningful solo I could before having to take a breath. It wasn't circular breathing; it was just one long breath. And in my solo there would be references and phrases and pauses and quotations, and I would try to use the same mechanics in my music as Robinson did in his writing.

"Then I reached a point where I grew and became one with it. I de-froked myself of all the information I had gained and stopped thinking about the mechanics of soloing. I just did it, and that's when the fun started."

All the same, in spite of the spontaneous creativity, in spite of this sum total of logic and surprise, most important in his music is a human fallibility, complete with chinks and flaws. Unlike other more technically commanding and reliable players (the implacable Michael Brecker comes to mind), Henderson messes up.

Sometimes, especially up high, he will push a solo just a little too far, snooker himself in smudged high-note patterns, end up the victim of the fearless momentum of his ideas. On one of his most famous and best-loved solos, "Invitation" (on the 1968 album *Tetragone*), Henderson floats fractured put notes that often fall away into nothing less than an abyss. The

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THE CRUNCH

space they create is almost heroically excruciating, until at last he recovers his position and rebuilds the solo with more dependable patterns and trills.

What he achieves, of course, is creative tension. It's like watching an experienced rock climber or trapeze artist. It's listening to someone at the height of their powers take the most frightening risks, and it's maybe because of this that, in contrast to these moments of inspired exploration, the main body of his work can occasionally seem over-familiar. It's as if the danger in his playing requires him to have more regular territory to fall back on. Smear harmonic patterns, repeated note clusters and low trills are very identifiable Henderson hallmarks – dramatic effects that can seem clichéd and that diminish with over-use.

Yet focus on these hairline cracks in his playing and you'll realise they are far from being points of weakness. In fact, run them by Henderson himself, along with other criticism of his work – that it's perhaps too mainstream, lacking in stylistic innovation – and it's almost as if, in the least arrogant way possible, they don't even register.

He listens very intently when you ask him a question, holds his head in the same bowed position he does on stage and answers carefully, precisely, but his perplexity leaves you feeling strangely awkward, embarrassed almost to have suggested them. Henderson takes these criticisms in the same dignified, elegant fashion he applies to the rest of his life.

"Well, I'm not used to hearing about my faults, especially that I lack innovation," he replies in an even quieter tone than usual. "I find it difficult to disagree because it might sound like I'm too much on the defensive, but I don't think I've ever read that. And I've certainly never felt that myself."

Because, finally, there is an athletic expansiveness about Henderson's approach that overcomes any limitations. He has always exposed himself to the widest possible range of music – from Country and Western to string quartets, Polish polkas and Balinese gamelan – and derived as much inspiration from literary role models as from musical ones.

"My masters, my teachers were Charlie Parker, Ben Webster, Flip Phillips, Stan Getz and Bud Powell, but some of the great authors have sometimes been even greater sources of inspiration. Herman Hesse has been very influential in my life, as has the Bible, and Norman Mailer."

It's a strange literary triumvirate, uneasy and contradictory, but Henderson's extra-musical interests go further still. Because for as long as he has been interested in music, he has also been preoccupied (and this will come as little surprise to those who experience a profound directness of emotion and expression in Henderson's music) with the science of communication.

"I was going to study linguistics at one time, but the music gradually took over. But I'm still fascinated by language and

communication – it's just that now I use music to communicate sound. And I'm sure these varied interests have made me a better musician.

As the interview comes to an end, Henderson lights up another cigarette and smiles ruefully as he recalls his earlier comments.

"OK, it's bad for me; I would like not to have to admit to smoking, but still, I'm not really interested in carrying baggage from one day to the next. I see my life as a continual search for the undiscovered, I'm trying to look for new stones to see what's under them – a new tune, a composition, an improvisational form, a new idea.

"I've got to keep trying to visit areas of the unknown," he continues drawing on the cigarette slowly, knowingly. "That's one of the things I really respected, admired and adored about the great Miles Davis – he was continually moving forward. I'd like to be like that character in the Bible – Lot I think he was – who, if he ever looked over his shoulder, would turn into a pillar of salt.

"I never want that to happen to me," he says, pausing to stub the butt out in the ashtray in front of him. "I'm a venturesome spirit; I'm afraid to look back."

23 WARREN ROAD FARNCOMBE GODALMING, SURREY GU7 3SH

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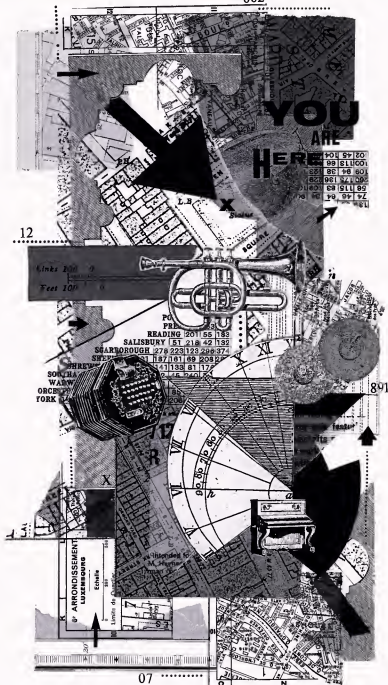
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Itinerary: the Wanderin' Stars



*Monitoring the noises
from every direction.*

*This month: Max Roach,
Joey Baron, Napalm Death,
Gang Starr and
the music of the camps.*



*Chet Baker plays to the balcony: by Bruce Weber
(taken from the film Let's Get Lost)*

wire winner: bach's last

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

The Art of Fugue BWV1080

Sony SKA1937 2 CD

"THE ART of Fugue" was Bach's final achievement and the last of his series of monothematic contrapuntal works from the closing years of his life, preceded by the "Vom Himmel hoch" Variations and "The Musical Offering". There seem to have been two stages in his labours on it, from the mid-1740s to 1748 and then, in the course of preparing it for publication, in 1748-9 and perhaps 1750 (the year of his death). This music was intended as a final demonstration of his powers in contrapuntal composition, and is a long series of fugues and canons, all termed "contrapuncti" here, which deploy all the devices of imitative counterpoint such as inversion, retrograde, stretto, augmentation, diminution, etc with astonishing intellectual mastery. It was also a reactionary work in that it was couched in forms that were passing out of use, and it was intended as an act of preservation.

Bach did not quite complete the design because of the blindness which overtook him during the last few months of his life, and the awesome concluding quadruple fugue is unfinished. (According to Mizler, writing in 1754, the composer intended to add another quadruple fugue that could be reversed in all its parts, but this is uncertain.) "The Art of Fugue" was published posthumously by Bach's sons in an imperfect form that gave rise to numerous misunderstandings. And it was, like certain other great works, among the all-time worst-sellers, only 40 copies being purchased in the original edition – of which 16 survive. It appeared, as he had intended, in open score, with no hint as to instrumentation, though most of it lies comfortably under two hands on a keyboard.

Despite being keenly studied by such nobles as Mozart and Beethoven, "The Art of Fugue" was long considered a purely theoretical work, and the idea of actually performing it did not arise until the 1920s with Gräser's scoring for chamber orchestra. Since then there have been many arrangements, and recordings. On the above two CDs it receives an immaculate performance, dating from 1987, by the Juillard Quartet. This cannot have been a sound world that Bach can have had in mind because the string

quartet did not emerge in his lifetime. But he was a great one for transferring his own and others' music from one medium to another so it is unlikely that he would have objected. And certainly fine quartet playing like this lends great clarity to the intricate movement of the parts.

For a real appreciation of this music a score is needed plus a step-by-step guide to all the contrapuntal moves. Best in this latter regard is Donald Tovey's *A Companion to The Art of Fugue*, published by Oxford University Press in 1931 and still in print. **MAX HARRISON**

wire winner: Bailey then and now

DEREK BAILEY/LOUIS MOHOLO/THEBE LIPERE

*

Village Life

Incus CD09 CD

DEREK BAILEY

*

Solo Guitar Volume 1

Incus CD10 CD

DEREK BAILEY

*

Solo Guitar Volume 2

Incus CD11 CD

THE DISTANCE between things – measured in pitch, timbre or time – in any case, the interval is always of prime importance in Derek Bailey's music. These two solo CDs highlight a historical interval: the 20-year gulf separating *Volume 1* (Bailey's first solo release in 1971, teissured with different cuts in 1978, now repackaged altogether) from the very different *Volume 2*. Of course, one thing they have in common is that they're both mandatory listening for anyone interested in the player who overhauled the grammar of the guitar, or for that matter, for anyone seriously concerned with improvisation.

The early solos speak for themselves. Compositions(!) by Willem Breuker, Misha Mengelberg and Gavin Bryars offer a glimpse of the road not taken; the 10 improvisations are scabrous, restless and utterly brilliant. In some ways, Bailey's guitar playing on the new solos is more conventional – no extra strings, no preparations, no pedal, no direct

interrogation of the instrument itself. The music, however, remains stubborn and unorthodox, an extra richness and sonorosity permitting him to explore in depth the total topographies of fretboard and harmonics and all points in between.

Like Bailey's glorious encounter with Brazilian percussionist Cyro Baptista on Cyro (Incus CD01), *Village Life* delves into a stylistic and traditional interval, the space between different cultures of improvising. Listen to the way that, without precisely linking himself to pulse, Bailey works with percussionist Lipere in the sublime closing minutes of "Tune It". And check out how Lipere complements a long-lingering guitar note with didgeridoo early in the title cut, and how drummer Moholo uses his maraca kit-sound and delicate cymbal-play – surprisingly quiet throughout – to bestow a jazz



power on the proceedings without ploughing over the others. On this live recording the connections made are never obvious – no lesson in bridge-building, no syncretism. It is, rather, a disc with deep respect for the interval. **JOHN CORBETT**

wire winner: tenor titan

JOE HENDERSON

*

Lush Life

Verve 511 779-2 CD

PERHAPS UNIQUELY among the bop players who came to prominence in the 1960s, Joe Henderson continued to develop in artistic stature through the lean period of the 1970s, and into the bop renaissance of the last

decade (when many of his contemporaries found nothing new to say, or were content to coast on their reputations). Henderson has consistently refined his approach to both tenor saxophone and the music he plays, discovering greater and greater depths within his chosen musical vocabulary.

Lush Life is a collection devoted entirely to the music of composer and arranger Billy Strayhorn, with the exception of the opening "Isfahan", which is jointly composed with Ellington (although the Duke also took part in the creation of the initially extemporised-in-the-studio "Drawing Room Blues", credited in this version to Strayhorn).

Diversity is the keynote, in terms of both the music chosen and the instrumental combinations in which it is played. "Lush Life", one of the trickiest and most subtle tunes ever committed to paper, is a remarkable solo

"Rain Check", the angular "Lotus Blossom" gives way to the sensuous beauty of "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing". The latter is the pick of the quintet cuts, with the two hornmen eschewing any competitive lick-spinning for a total absorption in the demands of the music.

And on and on it goes. Every track demands comments, demands further listening. Stanley Crouch's sleeve note suggests this session may well have produced a masterpiece. I think he may be right.

KENNY MATHIESON

wire winner: absolute radical art

NAPALM DEATH

★

Utopia Banished
Earsche MOSH53 CD

It's BEEN said before, but say it again: Napalm Death are the best. They're so sussed, so righteous and so perfectly angry that they don't mind looking like a bunch of dumb fucks (always a good sign). Shane Embury and Mark Greenway write lyrics that move with the syntax of agonised thought, blunt resistance to the horror of the modern world that creates its own cadences, improvises its own rhetoric. Napalm Death are everything that anarcho-punks Crass promised but failed to deliver: they take on the limitations of their stance in the texture of their art, don't overreach themselves. Politics without pomposity. Try *I Abstain!* (*Sawmaw my pride!*)/*What? Pride behind your blinkered eyes!*)/*Your england is that!* "The Lads Together" – *You'll fall* ("I Abstain") or *Progression Or Regression!* (*Do opinions count or do they count!*)/*The plot of shit!* (*that the!*) *Alternative Press delights as with Critique Elite – ill informed!* *No wrong can be done, depending on the tread at!* *Times to be untrendy!* *Unexposed Exile!* *Reluctantly we all indulge their tasteful hype* ("Exile").

Even the punctuation is innovative; it compares to BLAST's Voracious assault of 1914 (in case you think this entails sympathy for Wyndham Lewis's subsequent political direction, "Aryanisms" is a minutely observed anti-fascist polemic). The care and honesty of their lyric is only equalled by the nerveless vibrancy of their musical scummen. New drummer Danny Herrera is amazing: here speed and precision become terrifying and beautiful. They're also really funny,

precisely because they have no truck with humour or irony, as if their utterness will burn a hole in social reality.

A dreamlike notion that life eases by, / cushioning the blow of impending reality, / Awakeness is flogging us – awake! ("Awake")

The you they rail against is the socially constructed persona of civil and juridical fictions: they want to bust the ego's membrane through, slog beyond, not float in appalling distances. On the back of the CD they crouch round a tree painted with the slogan: CHANGE YOUR LIFE. Napalm Death help, they really do. BEN WATSON

wire winner: on the ball

VELJO TORMIS

★

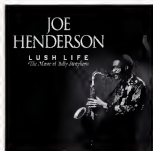
Forgotten Peoples

ECM New Series 1459/60 434 275 CDLP

THE SONGS of the *Forgotten Peoples* are quite unlike anything I've heard before. Veljo Tormis is an Estonian composer, a contemporary of the better-known Arvo Part, who has concentrated almost entirely on vocal music. If Estonia was, at least till recently, a forgotten nation, the *Forgotten Peoples* of these six song-cycles are even more obscure: they are the Baltic Finns living on the borders of Estonia, Finland and Russia, who comprise the Livonian, Votic, Izhorian and Karelian peoples.

They have, as Tormis writes, a tragic history, driven hither and thither by more powerful neighbours, and are now dying out. Over 20 years, the composer has extensively researched their folk music, and transformed their "runic songs" into these contemporary yet timeless settings. In his plain, heartfelt way, Tormis laments their demise: "By now, all the Livonian, Votic and Izhorian singers, whose voices I still vividly remember, have passed away. I still get a Christmas card every year in Livonian, but for how much longer? It is because of this that the series end in farewells, with the departure unto eternity and space..."

The songs are performed *a cappella* by the mixed voices of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. They are in their original languages, though the titles are in Estonian, for the benefit of readers fluent in that still-living language. Despite the full English translations, the words when sung are hard to follow. In "The Only Son" from



saxophone piece in which Henderson immerses himself totally in the music; "Isfahan", "Lotus Blossom", and the inevitable "Take The A Train" are duos with bassist Christian McBride, pianist Stephen Scott, and drummer Greg Hutchinson respectively, all of them on top of their job throughout; "Rain Check" and "Drawing Room Blues" feature a trio, "Blood Count" a quartet, and "Johnny Come Lately", "U.M.M.G." and the ravishing "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing" a quintet, completed by trumpeter Wynton Marsalis.

Strayhorn's music and Henderson's magisterial playing provide dual linking threads throughout a finely-balanced set, designed not only to reveal the multi-faceted aspects of his music, but to bring them up in freshly-shining colours every time. The poignant ballad "Blood Count" slips easily into the vibrant, Caribbean-flavoured rhythms of

"Vespan Paths", the singer tells how his raft flies away out of control: "ka ii sizzu minum kehker nouste'e se, da wubh ki'i sokon sozein'e..."

But the appeal of the songs is universal. Weddings figure prominently, not surprisingly, in "Vulvic Wedding Songs". The rounds of "Ington Evenings" are followed by poignant and sometimes bizarre episodes from rural life in "Vespan Paths". The longer, mythic tales of "Karelian Destiny" are on a different level, and for these powerful songs Tormis has fashioned more contemporary-sounding dissonances. "Eternal" is the great circle of life, eternal are the life events repeating in their own way with each passing age. This is unforgettable music, and thanks should go to ECM for a superb recording.

ANDY HAMILTON

soundcheck

THE AMBOY DUKES

The Amboy Dukes

Masterstream MDCD 910 CD

Journey to the Centre of the Mind

Masterstream MDCD 911 CD

"FEATURING TED NUGENT" does not yet signify an essential purchase, but stranger things have happened – the Beastie Boys have already disoriented him for "The Biz vs The Nuge", and where Ad Rock and friends lead, others follow. The most familiar songs here, popularised first by the great *Nuggets* album and then by a pioneering sisterhood of the road car advert, is the straightforwardly Them-ish "Baby Please Don't Go", but there's a lot more going on here besides that. Very nearly the Soup Dragons of their day, the Dukes revelled in the stylistic switchback, hurtling from a dirty blues that make the Standells sound sophisticated, to the drippiest psychedelic harmonising. They're also one of the few bands of all time whose bass playing really needs to be called muscular: the man responsible – Bill "Mom" White – was 1964's Mr Detroit. Highlights of their 1967 debut are the absurd "Down On Philips Escalator" (think about it), which manages to be an even more persuasive argument than "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds" for abstaining from drug use, and the tragic "Sobbin' In My Beer", a sorry tale of toughing out rejection, offers a valuable insight into the problems Ted would have in

relating to women in later life.

By the second album, a year later, Nugent and the band's other guitarist and songwriter Steve Farmer have stopped collaborating. The input of the man whose amp would one day be turned up so loud that a pigeon would disintegrate when it flew across the front of his speakers is already getting a good deal heavier. This development has a memorably depressing effect on the gentler-sounding compositions of his less celebrated partner, which often, particularly in the case of the excellent "Death Is Life" ("Time heals all wounds it's been said, but try healing wounds when you're dead"), exhibit genuine psychosis. A concept album of sorts, it's probably better than Hamilton Streetcar (*Bar of course, Hamilton Streetcar* – Ed.), but not by much. The title song got to Number One in the US at the time though, if the liner notes are to be believed: this stuff was popular.

BEN THOMPSON

CHET BAKER

Grey December

Pacific Jazz CDP 791169 2 CD

THESE DAYS, Chet Baker may be remembered as much as a style icon as he is as a trumpeter – did he actually live long enough to do any Gap ads? – but Pacific Jazz are having none of that, keeping the famous phiz off the sleeve in favour of a trumpeter that seems to be tangled in a knitting frame. In fact, they could have played up the kitsch factor on the strength of the first four tracks, which feature the Baker vocal quaver at its most flirtatiously tremulous – although I'd contest "boyish, earnest and vacuous", as the sleeve puts it. Recorded in 1955 with a line-up including Bud Shank on flute and Russ Freeman on piano, these tracks boast improbably luscious string arrangements by Johnny Mandel, Marty Paich and Frank Campo, the most bizarre being on the absolutely bleak title track, which reminds me of those ominously creaking strings on the *Shorlock Holmes* series of the 1960s. Shank's flute at the start of "Someone To Watch Over Me" gives the track an exceedingly fey tone, but it's a real heartbreaker.

The rest, from two years earlier, bears no relation. A septet set arranged with brisk, precise fussiness by Jack Montrose, it features a three-sax line-up with Montrose himself on tenor and contributing five numbers. The most interesting is the jokey "A Dandy Lane", which sounds like some sort of Christmas carol from the Highlands – it comes in

two takes, the first showcasing a buoyant, humorous Freeman solo and Bob Gordon's fruity baritone. The two last tracks provide more of the lugubriousness on which Baker thrives so well – "Moonlight Becomes You" and "Goodbye", both lovely, and again both utterly patched. It's a pretty incongruous pairing of two sessions, and the septet stuff doesn't let its hair down as readily as it might, but it's enjoyable through and through.

JONATHAN ROMNEY

JOEY BARON

Tongue In Groove

JMT 840158 2 CD

BARON'S CV is impressively varied, taking in sessions with Jim Hall and Toots Thielemans as well as with Frisell, Fred Hersch and fellow-JMT-ers Herb Robertson and Hank



Roberts. His debut as leader, credited to the imaginatively constituted Baron Down, is a sequence of abrasive hit-and-runs, played in a manner that recalls some of Shannon Jackson's or Al Laff's more stripped down ventures. Without a harmony instrument, the contours are very abrupt and raw-edged, and it's surprising that Baron doesn't make some further use of electronics, as he did on the Knitting Factory live sampler and on the *Miniature* trio (also JMT) with Roberts and Tim Berne. Steve Swell's trombone is used to fill in some of the gaps with big glisses and sustains, but for the most part it's Ellery Eskelin on (poorly registered) tenor saxophone who provides what little normalisation this music calls for.

Described unblushingly as an "all-acoustic, all-live, no mix, no edit, gutbucket digital [digital?]" recording, it sounds exactly like that, at once brittle and fuzzy, but

with a barreling energy that takes it over the worst of the potholes. Baron takes a surprisingly "legitimate" line, striking hard, but holding to countable figures and rarely deviating from them throughout a song. Noisily entertaining, but not a patch on his work elsewhere.

BRIAN MORTON

BELA BARTOK

Contrasts; Mikrokosmos (excerpts)

Sony MPK47676 CD

MUSICIANS WHO were great composers and great pianists were less rare in the 19th century than in our own. Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Bartók were the last, and among these Bartók was by far the greatest composer. The "Mikrokosmos" of 1926-39



form the most accessible large body of his music, consisting of 153 pieces of progressive difficulty, from elementary unison melodies to works suitable for concerts. Besides covering numerous problems of piano technique – the player is especially challenged on the rhythmic plane – these didactic pieces refer to many styles, reflecting countless aspects of Bartók's ethnomusicological findings and including sophisticated references to other composers such as Bach and Schumann, not to mention, in the fourth of the concluding Six Dances in Bulgar Rhythm, an imitation of Gershwin better than anything Gershwin himself could have written.

In Bartók's interpretations – of his own works here and in those of other composers elsewhere – everything seems to come from the music and nothing from the performer, and this despite the fact that this is playing of complete individuality. He expresses the

music's essence directly, and every note is alive in his hands. So far as we can tell from these old recordings, he was not a wide-ranging colourist, but, as his pupil Lajos Hernádi wrote, it is as if he carved each phrase in stone, with absolute decisiveness. Also striking, in view of the reputation he once had as a musical barbarian, are the mellifluous character of most of this playing – its rhythmic acuity notwithstanding – the absence of percussive harshness, and the absolutely unflinching sensitivity, which affords glimpses of a more intense reality.

These 31 selections from the "Mikrokosmos" sequence were set down by Bartók in New York in four 1940 sessions. (One piece included on the first of these occasions, No. 143 Divided Arpeggios, is inexplicably omitted.) They are presented in an order so judged as to be worthy of the Affinity label in its great days (daze). Doubtless Sony's justification is that this is the order in which he recorded them, yet people would surely prefer to hear them in the order in which he published them, which is in order of rising executive difficulty and ascending stylistic complexity.

Benny Goodman, his musical curiosity quite unblunted by his success elsewhere, jointly commissioned "Contrasts" with Joseph Szigeri in 1938 and they recorded it with Bartók two years later. It is a pungently characteristic score, its three movements composed with brilliant inventiveness for both violin and clarinet, all challenges being met with perfect mastery by Szigeri and BG. However, it has, deservedly, been much written about, so the "Mikrokosmos" have been given most of the space here.

MAX HARRISON

BEASTIE BOYS

Check Your Head

Capitol Records EST 2171 CD/MC/LP

BEASTIE BOYS never seem to waste time agonising over the "identity" of white rap, a genre which can only be defined reactively since the restatement of (black) cultural nationalism by their one-time label mates Public Enemy. The burden of articulating whiteness, a defensive one, fell to those who followed the Beasties: Third Bass, Young Black Teenagers and Vanilla Ice: as if the weight of this was too much to bear, all three seemed to have imploded under the strain, leaving the Beastie Boys alone on planet Illin', still passing the mic and goofing around.

On this 25 track double album there's a lot of partying going on, but it sounds fantastic. On "Finger Lickin' Good" the tabla drone underscores the familiar brat yell; it moves into a choppy wah-wah before exiting on a single line sample from early 60s Bob Dylan. "Strand Together" drenches MCA's voice in phase effects, giving it the sound and atmosphere of the late 60s albums of Spirit or Traffic. Meanwhile, Adrock rides the timpani and hi-hat to a climax – it peaks, and is interrupted by the mechanical laughter of a wind-up clown. The thick production seems not only from the Beastie Boys' use of such reality-effect inducers such as guitars and drums, but also from the addition of Mark Ramos Nishita on clavinet, organ, D6 and Wuritzer (actually he also co-writes nine tracks on the LP). "Mark on the Bus" is his solo overdund – exuberant, hairy and above all beatific, he has plugged the Beastie Boys straight into Ken Kesey's world. The result: one of the best records of the year.

KOWDO ESHUN

BENNINK/MOORE/ REIJSEGER

Clusone 3

Rainbow Disc 01 CD

THE FIRST selection here, a lengthy event that encompasses extended free-form improvising, a touch of bebop, a central passage – "Providence" – that recalls that singular mid-tempo lode that Ornette used so much when he had the quartet, then a reflective finish that disappears into a fragment of Neal Hefti's "Girl Talk", gives some idea of the mix that the Clusone Trio works within. Add in some mambas, a couple of Herbie Nichols songs, and it's easy to see why they don't have problems working the European festival circuit. It's intensely virtuosic stuff but it's also approachable and takes you into its confidence from the first notes.

If there's a problem, it may be that in the light of Michael Moore's fluent, powerful alto (and his intriguing clarinet work) together with Han Bennink's drumming – he's in his element here, with a huge range of devices and effects in a spread of musical styles that requires them all – the third member of the trio may get less than his due. Cellist Ernst Reijseger is in fact a rare musician, recalling at times Oscar Pettiford's work on the instrument ("Rollo II") also Mingus (hear him strumming on the lush "Debbie Warden"), then coming on like Ornette on violin ("Pipistrello I") and finally

producing a startling imitation of guitarist Charlie Byrd on the samba material. One way and another, then, it's hard to fault. Just enjoy it. **JACK COOKE**

SEAN BERGIN & M.O.B.
Live At The Bimbis
BVH 0002 CD 9202 CD

DURBAN-BORN, Amsterdam-based, sometime London-busking Bergin put together My Own Band (M.O.B.) in 1987. It's a big 'un and a good 'un, now checking in at over 20 pieces compared with the ten of its 1988 debut recording for Nimbus, *Kids Mysteria*. The new album, taken in concert in April 1991 in Amsterdam, is on Willem Breuker's label, and one can see how Breuker (and his fans) would be impressed with Bergin's style. In this irreverent cabaret of dance-hall genres the joyful, rumpus-raising rummages through Bergin's tunes are leavened by precision-crafted interludes like "Plastic Bag" for three-sax choir and the somewhat less precise run-through for "Old Devil Moon", and the general air of imminent anarchy is checked by exuberant solos from a battery of incisive soloists.

The free jazz is set in a framework of

compositions with a strong flavour of the leader's native South Africa, which inevitably – predictably – calls up comparisons with the bands of Chris McGregor, Louis Moholo and Dudu Pukwana, who is honoured in a track named for him and featuring trombonist Joost Buis and altoist Paul Stocker. Other featured players include Tobias Delius on various reeds, Alex Maguire on piano, Tristan Hoessinger on cello and vocalist Han Buhs, sounding like a demented Tom Waits on the final track, "House Wine".

HARRY WITHERDEN

**BRÖTZMANN/VAN HOYE /
BENNINK PLUS ALBERT
MANGELSDORFF**

Live In Berlin
FMP CDS4/35 2CD

THIS TWO-HOUR TWO-CD set tidies up three LPs as the music comes up to its 21st birthday. If maybe it's "dated" in the sense of being of its time, it remains fresh because it retains the flavour of that one vital duet to the wilder shores of improvisation in all its excitement and ferocity. There are times when Han Bennink's hammering at his kit, added to Brötzmann's blamethrower tenor,

can sound like some manic DIY-er rebuilding his kitchen against the clock, but there are other times when moments of great delicacy, humour, and indeed blind inspiration, occur.

In particular, it offers another chance to relish the work of Mangelsdorff, arguably the most underrated of all trombonists, of whatever period. And if Fred Van Hove sometimes finds himself fighting a losing battle against the old upright joanna he's got here, that relates to circumstances. Ornette and Miles were on at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall at or around this time; these guys were having to do the business at a cafe down the road, but they weren't about to be over-looked.

Over the years some mellowing and a degree of calculated eccentricity has developed in the work of some of these musicians, as well as the diaspora factor. Inevitably, perhaps; but on the night any one of them can still frighten the life out of you. This set documents a moment when they all meant it, all the time, and it's worth getting hold of. A great rescue. **JACK COOKE**

BILL CONNORS

Swimming With A Hole In My Body

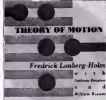
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amm
live at the Arts Club Chicago 25th May 1984
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Clarinet in the 20th century



Iven Stockl
Berlin, 1984/1985



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I lost track of guitarist Bill Connors after his stint in Jan Garbarek's group in the early 1980s, and have no idea what he is up to these days, but this ECM re-issue of a 1980 release is a reminder that he was a deft stylist with a nice line in harmonic variation, and, on this occasion, a decidedly pastel shading.

Connors is probably best known for his work on electric guitar with Return to Forever, a band given to a certain degree of pastel shading themselves at times, and he cut at least one rock-flavoured album. On this punningly-titled solo recital, however, he plays acoustic guitars, captured with the usual remarkable fidelity by ace engineer, Jan Erik Kongshaug.

It is a cool, carefully considered performance, even where the music achieves its most

I CAN'T name many famous Belgian bass-players, but I'd guess Deronde must be one of the best. Certainly he is an elegant, imaginative accompanist and soloist who knows how to put together an interesting programme – excepting, perhaps, a rather ill-considered rehash of the *Concerto D'Annam* – and a convincing band.

Spontaneous Effort (which is, by the way, the name of the band and the album – I thought I'd better explain that right off just in case I get tempted to use the word eponymously somewhere in this review) does not break any new ground – I've temporarily given up expecting to hear anything new from jazz – but it reviews well-mapped territory with enthusiasm, skill and panache, and I'm quite content to settle for that. Tenor sax duties are assumed by J.R. Monterose, a strong, passionate improviser with a tough yet rich tone. I can't recall hearing much by or about Monterose for a couple of decades, which is pretty scandalous, and the text-books generally ignore him despite his membership of some fine bands like Mingus's *Jazz Workshop*, Kenny Dorham's *Jazz Prophets* and (if your taste runs to that sort of thing) Buddy Rich and Maynard Ferguson. This album can leave no room for doubt that he's still around.

The personnel is completed by Philip Catherine (often too bland for my taste, but he does due nicely with Monterose on an oblique version of "All The Things You Are"), pianist Michel Herr, and drummer Jan De Haas.

BARRY WITHERDEN

PHILIPPE DESCHEPPER

Sad Navi Sad

IDA 608 CD CD

DESCHÉPPER/GODARD/ MICENMACHÉ

Impossible Trio

Telecons THE 0101 CD

dynamic effects, as on the restless "Frog Stroke", or parts of the longest track, "Sunder To The Water", where some engaging echo effects are also employed. The "swimming" concept runs through the compositions (all by Connors), while repeated motifs and themes also help to create the effect of a continuous thematic programme at work.

If not the most rivetting of recordings, it is often a subtle one, and is sweetly played, with a palpable sense that his impressive technique is put to the service of musical invention, and not the other way around. It won't qualify as one of the year's essential re-releases, but guitar fans could do worse than check it out.

KENNY MATHIESON

FREDDIE DERONDE

Spontaneous Effort

Aglo KGL 081 CD

deftly around the semi-acoustic meanderings of the guitarist it evinces a twee and bland sound that does little credit to Swallow's ability or highlight Deschepper's skills.

Impossible Trio, on the other hand, is a more eclectic and esoteric affair. A quicky free-form exploration of the Bill Frisell kind aided and abetted by ethnic percussion, pyrotechnical tuba playing and less syrupy improvisations from Deschepper, it's a collage of sounds from folk, rock, rock 'n' roll to pop with all three instruments taking different playing roles like actors in a budget theatre. It's humorous and even slightly ridiculous with Godard's tuba reaching trouse-right pitches and heavy-metal basslines in places. Even better seen than heard on record, I suspect.

LAURA CONNELLY

EYE AND I

Eye and I

Epic EK 47973 CD/LP/MC import only

"No one told me I'd live my life playing by someone else's rules," declaims DK Dyson in one of the arena-sized rock moments of *Eye & I's* debut. It's a record that battles with rules, sometimes subtly, sometimes head-on – and at its least successful it merely abides by what it confronts. The band attempt to mark their own groove out of rock, funk, soul and noise – especially through the voice of familiar name DK Dyson and bassist Melvin Gibbs' history with Defunkt and Ronald Shannon Jackson.

The opening tracks have Dyson's voice at odds with the lyrics and the music uncertainly pitched between structured rock and experimentation. Why segue from real drums to programme, giving the last minute and a half to J Logic's turntables? It would have been more challenging to mix them immediately. I worried that Dyson's voice – too confident for some of the "softer" lyrics, too definite for the "jazz" end of the spectrum it sometimes suggests, a combination of Madonna, Axl Rose, Whitney Houston and her own timbre – was never going to find its place. In fact she begins the turnaround with the catchy lyric "A virgin heart always thinks it can't be broken . . . a virgin heart never seems to heal." And the whole band becomes more distinctive with the dancy "Easy Goodbye", where J Logic's turntable dialectics are given equal time and weight to drive the song. And then comes "Venus in Furs" (also the video and single): this is startlingly good. The whole band settle into the familiar tune with vehemence, a commitment to

GUITARIST PHILIPPE Deschepper is France's answer to John Scofield and John Abercrombie. In whatever context, and these two albums are quite different, he displays the kind of contemplative melancholy of the latter and soft country/bluesiness of the former to rather MOR effect.

Sad Navi Sad is essentially Deschepper's album helped out by bass guitarist Steve Swallow and drummer Jacques Mahieux as well as performances from Henri Texier and Jean-Luc Pontieux among other guests. It's a largely fusion-styled affair and though Swallow intertwines his treble bass sound

claiming this cover with utter conviction and style. DK's voice comes into its own, completely both confident and weary. She puts lip gloss to the vocals and polish to the leather without a hint of sheen over the pain. It manages to be the best mixture of the sad and punishing (up to and including Dyson's final laugh and murmured reclamation "kill him") since Marvin Gaye's "Masochistic Beauty". The whole band reeks of conviction. Richie Harrison guides the pulse while Melvin Gibbs streams into the groove like a flood of heart's blood, helping to cause Dyson's burst aorta of a voice. It's the kind of fuck-you trauma that the Black Rock Coalition was surely set up to achieve and claim.

Unfortunately, it's also the only track not written by the band, but this is not to say that there aren't other highlights. "Down to Zero" flips back to the earlier off-march of voice and lyrics. But "Don't Just Say Peace" has its own dialect and approach. The last three tracks — especially "Prisoner in Babylon" and the finale of "World Without End" — are storming amalgams of hurtling voice and rock music fed with the noise-abound swirl of Gibb's Defunkt/Decoding Society experience.

If CDs weren't over-priced this would be worth buying for "Venus in Furs" alone. For those without that luxury, get the single. Otherwise there's enough here to keep in your collection and to hope that further recordings can mix them more consistently to their strengths (record companies take note).

ANDREW POTHECARY

ART FARMER

Warm Valley

Concord C-4212 CD/MC

Thus, I assume, is a CD reissue of the 1982 recording by the man with a mellow flugelhorn. (1982 was before the CD era, wasn't it? The steam age seems very long ago now.) Art is in the impeccably tasteful and relaxed company of Fred Hersch (piano), Ray Drummond (bass) and Akia Tana (drums), with a menu of mostly standards.

The gentle surface of Farmer's playing has been mistaken for blandness by some," writes Brian Priestley in *The Essential Companion*. The problem remains, though. Art, in this introspective, in fact introverted mood, is an acquired taste. He probably needs a tenor foil, and the Jazztet recordings with Benny Golson, from the late 50s and early 60s, before he switched to flugelhorn, remain his finest. On *Warm Valley* he plays interesting

lines but there's no attack; the effect is often so forlorn and lifeless that he clearly needs a spark from somewhere.

I said the band are "relaxed", but that's just what they shouldn't be. Pianist Hersch does occasionally forget his manners by playing the odd forte dissonance. He is a fine pianist, and the most enjoyable moments come from him. Which isn't as it should be.

ANDY HAMILTON

GANG STARR

A Daily Operation

Cosmos Records CTLP27 CD/LP

GALLIANO

A Joyful Noise Unto The Creator

Talkin' Loud PAR801 CD/LP

HIPHOP is the culture of which rap — the music — is just a part: true to the tradition of all African American music, and its forebears the blues, bebop, soul jazz and funk, rap is a genre with its own language and value-system, a call and response particular to its immediate audience — the underbelly of Black society.

By comparing two of the most prominent exponents of the so-called school of "jazz rap" — Gang Starr and Galliano — you can clearly see why the Americans have no use for the term, despite the fact that Gang Starr's successful entrée on wax reclaimed rap as a "Jazz Thing" in Spike Lee's *Mov' Better Blues*; they don't use it because they don't need to prove anything.

While Gang Starr's *A Daily Operation* is rooted in given experience in daily facts they can't escape, Galliano's *A Joyful Noise Unto The Creator* takes its cue from an idealistic and self-chosen lifestyle: the difference is between a life led and a life perceived.

Moving the music of oppression into the 90s, Gang Starr work both the spoken word and music to signify their experience; DJ Premier's sample weave of jazz and funk grooves complements the restrained delivery of rapper Guru, giving them a distinct sound of their own. Galliano on the other hand — from another land — provide only a pale imitation of struggle, featuring wholesale soundbites from reggae, jazz, funk and gospel, thrown onto live but unprogressive grooves.

Gang Starr (like all good rap) remain true to the spirit and tradition of jazz, most directly on "I'm the Man", which introduces two freestyle (improvising) rappers, reminiscent of an old-style blowing session. Conversely Galliano, like most of this British

"jazz rap" school, seem to suffer a kind of arrested development — as shown on (the aptly titled) "What Is Jazz/Jazz Is What". They offer no resonant answers, providing only stylised images of musical and social integration but none of the stark reality of Watts, Compton, Atlanta, Harlem. . . .

TWA

GIORGIO GASLINI

Gaslini Plays Monk

Soul Note 121028-2 CD

Schumann Reflections

Soul Note 121120-2 CD

TWO SEEMINGLY disparate events here — pianist Gaslini taking on Robert Schumann's childhood reminiscences from 1838 and Thelonious Monk's jagged urbanities from another world and another century. But



what's common to both is an attempt to explore the composer's mind in order to put it together with the performer's own sensibilities.

The Monk set dates from 1981, before his death and the flood of "plays Monk" that followed. I've lived with the vinyl edition for some years and it never fails to amaze me: the clockwork oddity of the brief "Round About Midnight", the boogie-woogie opening and lengthy rummaging in the bowels of the piano on "Let's Call This"; the percussive romanticism of "Let's Cool One"; the Ellington interpolations on "Pannonica" and the fragmented "Epitaphy" all create a world to which Gaslini claims ownership but which simultaneously acknowledges the separate life of the source material and rather importantly insists that the listener become part of that intricate bargain. This is music that should be better known and more widely

studied.

Schumann's "Kinderszenen" are not similarly excavated — as what might be called "student studies" they were built to retain their shape however they were distressed; nor were they designed to sustain improvisation, so Gaslini appropriately plays them straight, as read. As an alternative, he's constructed an improvised four-part set of "Schumann Reflections" which is interpolated into the original 13 short pieces at various points. Bass and drums are used in these passages. I wasn't sure it all worked at first hearing, but it has to be said it does begin to hold more water the more you play it.

So whether this 1984 essay (both are CD transfers) will come to hold the lasting richness of the Monk explorations is an open question. Yet there is still that quality about it, of engaging the listener as partner in the

Santos and Gary Burton's bassist and drummer, Steve Swallow and Bob Moses, added to the usual galaxy of British star players.

Gibbs had returned to his musical *alma mater*, the Berklee School of Music, as tutor and composer-in-residence in 1974. Most of the pieces on *Chrome Waterfall* grew out of his work with his Boston students. The three earlier records had featured some excellent bass-guitar playing from Roy Babbington, Jack Bruce and Chris Spellding, but Swallow's distinctive sound, especially when matched with Catherine's agile elegance, was perfect for Gibbs's music at this point.

The characteristic touches are all there — supple, cheerfully repetitive tunes, lugubrious reed voicings with tart brass edges — and he still enjoyed hinting at his enthusiasm for the music of Olivier Messiaen with slow melodies in weightless free-fall, washes of orchestral colour or looming, chordal slabs.

Gibbs was amongst the first writers to convincingly mix rock elements into orchestral jazz. Like Gil Evans, one of his major influences, he skilfully and organically integrated carefully arranged frameworks with the most "outside" improvisations, and the results still sound fresh 16 years later.

BARRY WITHERDEN

JIMMY GUIFFRE 3

1961

ECM 1458/39 CD



creative act, which seems to be a consistent factor in Gaslini's work. That in itself is so rare as to be worth the price of admission.

JACK COOKE

MIKE GIBBS

The Only Chrome Waterfall Orchestra

ah um 009 CD

MIKE GIBBS once confided to Kenneth Ansell that he began to concentrate on writing because performing solos terrified him. Thus, on *Michael Gibbs*, *Tanglewood '63* and *Just Ahead*, the three albums that established his reputation as a highly individual and original composer and arranger, he left the piano and trombone duties to other hands and chops. *Chrome Waterfall*, originally issued in 1975, was the first recording under his own name on which he played. Still no solos, though. The featured players were Charlie Mariano, Philip Catherine, Jumma

A TWO CD re-release of the Verve albums *Fusion* and *Thesis* by the clarinetist's second legendary trio, with youngsters Paul Bley on piano and bassist Steve Swallow, who pioneered a kind of abstract, floating tonal/dissident jazz. Their (remixed) reappearance on the ECM label is more than appropriate; as Manfred Eicher acknowledges, Guiffre's group were largely responsible for forming his label's chamber-jazz aesthetic.

The earlier *Fusion* is the more determinedly mournful of the two, the leader's velvet breath-laden tone the texture and temperature of ice-cream, shimmering and elegant without being soporific. Taking the set as a whole, though, I do find this now-familiar chamber jazz mood of melancholy and resignation slightly oppressive.

Thesis explores a wider range of moods — joy, disturbance, even impotence — and material. Guiffre really expands both as a composer and an improviser here, taking sudden headlong flights up and down the instrument. In their racing nervous energy "Whirrer" and Carla Bley's "Ictus" stand as

absolute classics, making me think of the intervallic leaps and kinetic vigour of Anthony Braxton's music. Even when the music is sad and floating the group seems more playful and relaxed than the earlier session. Guiffre frequently blows down the clarinet producing little or no tone at all, at one point offering a fake cymbal accompaniment on Paul Bley's rather cloying "Carla" (to my mind the only weak tune here). "Sonic", "Flight", and "The Gamut" explore still freer forms and mix mutating, even suspended tempos, sometimes quite extraordinary moments of spontaneous intimacy developing. Sometimes the three just seem to stop together and confer in the quivering silence before taking the next step. The impression, strangely, being one of overwhelming power.

It has to be said that the massive quantity of music inspired by, and derived from, these experiments pales in comparison with them and has done nothing to diminish their quiet integrity, intelligence and grandeur. It remains some of the most coherently, elegantly *advanced* music to have ever been recorded.

RICHARD SCOTT

BEAVER HARRIS 360 DEGREE MUSIC EXPERIENCE

Beautiful Africa

Seed Note 121002 CD/LP

THIS 1979 quintet version of drummer Beaver Harris's group included one other survivor from the original 1968 line-up, Grachan Moncur III on trombone. Harris saw the group as a means of synthesising different aspects of the Afro-American musical tradition, but everything I have heard by them has been firmly cast in a jazz mould, albeit a supple and diverse one.

Most of the players were involved in the free jazz movement, but that is more evident in the improvised solos than in the metrical or harmonic material of the four compositions here. Harris's lengthy "African Drums", for example, sets up a vibrant, shuffling rhythm pattern for the improvisers to blow over, and only ex-Roland Kirk pianist Rahn Burton chooses to take his contribution very far into remote harmonic territory.

In keeping with the inclusive philosophy of the 360 degree experience, Burton's own "Aladdin's Carpet" is modal in feeling, while Moncur's "Love and Hate" represents the ballad tradition. The most abstract group

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To mark *The Wire*'s 10th birthday/100th edition, the NSA Jazz Section has revived the "Wire file", expanding it to include *Soundcheck* – more than 4000 record reviews covering a very wide musical spectrum (a useful guide, by the way, to the NSA's own collection activity over the same period of time).

The Wire Index will be available in September at a price of £8.00 (+ 95p p&p), but is available to *Wire* readers at a special pre-publication price of £6.00 (+ 95p p&p) until August 30. (As the size of the initial print run is dependent on volume of demand, there may be a slight delay before you receive your copy – please bear with us!)



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piece (and that only intermittently so) comes from bass player Cameron Brown, the partly-notated and partly-improvised "Baby Suite".

Both Moncar and saxophonist Ken McIntyre (who also contributes bassoon and flute) favour a lucid, solidly constructed approach to improvisation, while Harris clearly has at least as strong roots in swing as in the freer idioms evident in his percussion improvisation "Drums for Milano". A worthwhile re-release from a solid band.

KENNY MATHIESON

MICHAEL HARRISON

From Ancient Worlds

New Albion Records NA 042 CD

Well-tempered claviers? Enough, already. Welcome, please, the well-tempered keyboard and the return of those for whom twelve-

Terry Riley, Pandit Pran Nath or even Young.

The additional extra, in Harrison's case, is an "allegory of the soul". Although *From Ancient Worlds* is, in structural terms, presented as a chorale, there any connection with Western religious music (and Bach) ends. There's a certain temptation to write the whole thing off as a trickle-of-consciousness piece. For all its ringing luminosity, Harrison's piano-ripples are highly lyric and without the intervallic weirdnesses caused by his tuning. *From Ancient Worlds* would sit prettily on the new age crystal tip. Nevertheless, there is a meditative quality that pervades the album, which, souls or no souls, is a pleasing achievement.

LOUISE GRAY

MICHAEL HASHIM

A Blue Streak

Stash SE-C-546 CD

JOSHUA BREAKSTONE TRIO

9 By 3

Contemporary CCD-14062-2 CD

ROB SCHNEIDERMAN

Radio Waves

Revcon RSR CD 120 CD

THREE ALBUMS recorded by the legendary Rudy Van Gelder that sound as if they could have been made at his Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey studio 30 (maybe more) years ago.

For two of the three CDs here, that's a fact that disappoints: the Breakstone and Schneiderman releases fit so cleanly into the pukka post-bop mould that ultimately they fail to ignite. Pianist Schneiderman's *Radio Waves*, featuring a three-horned frontline with Ralph Moore on tenor, is especially prone to the faultlessly unfussy correctness of much neo-classical fare. Apart from one stunning track, "Slapdance-Tapstick", an off-beat, Monkish original, and some clever arrangements, the album has a mood and (mid-tempo) pace that is simply unremarkable, almost predictable.

The Breakstone release, although different in line-up – a guitar-led trio with Dennis Irwin on bass and Kenny Washington on drums – also falls unerringly into the great modern classical bag. Certainly Breakstone has listened keenly to Joe Pass, Wes Montgomery and most especially Grant Green (the whole feel of the album recalls Green's *Green Street* – without the soul), and his playing has

a clean, graceful, sweep to it, but on an album mostly of standards and swooping fours, he veers towards a politeness, especially on the ballads, that is little better than music for wine bars.

On first hearing, saxophonist Michael Hashim's recording actually seems the most ersatz of the three; it even comes with a sub-David Stone Marm cover design. And he settles on a soul-jazz quartet that couldn't sound more 60s time-locked: alto, guitar, drums... Hammond B-3 – a line-up that again echoes Blue Note's glory days – most notably Lou Donaldson's *The Natural Soul of Lou Donaldson*.

But Hashim's record is the most rewarding because of the young alto and soprano player's ardently melodic improvising gifts and, after countless Jimmy Smith/Larry Young/Young Disciples/Brand New Heavies big beat revivals, to British ears at least, it sounds vaguely and paradoxically modern. An album of backbeats and blues marches, *A Blue Streak* grooves and speeds along, the whole welded together by the singing, clear-toned logic of the leader. A player who makes good use of sliding, smudging blues inflections, but who also seems infused with an intelligent, versatile elan, Hashim seems on top of his solos, so in control, that you can almost hear the entire history of alto playing in his approach – right back even to the vibrant trickiness of the great Earl Boric.

And on an album of many strong melodies, best of all are Hashim's themselves – especially the breezy, swinging "Rose Street Summer", a fast soul shuffle that wouldn't be out of place on a Talkin' Loud or Something Else dancefloor. It doesn't get much more contemporary than that.

PHILIP WATSON

HEINZPETER HELBERGER

Musik

London HALL Disc 2 CD

THE LAST (first) release from this label, if memory serves, was some hitherto unrecorded Saeie (*Le Fils Du Etoué*). Helberger, born in Frankfurt 80 years ago, has much the same cracked spirituality and wit beauty. The vocal pieces to texts by Shakespeare are identifiably in the line of Schoenberg's settings of Stefan George (who turns up as a translator). There are the same dizzying octave-plus jumps between syllables and inversions of Hebraic melody, but there is also a touch of soft centre, a hint of Saeie's *Grande Messe des Passés*, that shifts the music back a generation. The earliest of the six composi-



tones were just *new* enough. Michael Harrison has taken a concert grand and modified it to create a Harmonic Piano, and with 23 tones per octave is a persuasive argument for the elegancies of just intonation; that is (aesthetically rather than technically), a finer tuning than, in avoiding the prescriptive conventional tuning, sets out to describe something more.

New rationales for retuning are not new. Varèse's teacher Buzoni crammed 113 different scales into the octave. More recently, LaMonte Young (with whom Harrison studied, later working as his piano tuner) conducted less ambitious explorations in his massive *Well-Tuned Piano* work. But in opting for tunings that correspond to ratios of Pythagorean proportions, Harrison is conceptually closer to Harry Partch (who developed a 43-scale octave based on ancient Greek scales) than to his microtonal mentors

tions is an orthodox *Musik für Klavier* (Helberger isn't prodigal with his ties). The later duos – violin and clarinet with piano, and, imaginatively, guitar and vibraphone – are more personal, and more involving. Helberger seems to prefer vocalised sounds and one can imagine all these pieces transposed and arranged for high voices. Their characteristic trajectory is toward resolution and stasis, or possibly redemption and forgiveness, for they emerge out of distinctly troubled intervals and themes that may reflect specific wartime experience (like Josef Beuys, Helberger was in the Luftwaffe) or a collective guilt for Germany's militaristic past. Towards the middle of the very recent *Musik für Violine und Klavier*, there's a subtle intimation of Beethoven's "fate" motif and the troubled second theme from the *Ersatz* symphony. Helberger still isn't a well-known figure on these shores. The liner notes are in German, so no comfort there.

BRIAN MORTON

PÉPÉ KALLÉ

Larger Than Life

Stems Africa STCD 1018 CD

ISMAEL LO

Ismael Lo

Mango 162-539 919-2 CD

BIGGIE TEMBO

Out Of Africa

Cockong Vinyl COCKCD 059 CD

PAPA WEMBA

Le Voyageur

Realworld CD8W20 CD

THE HUGE Pépé Kallé is known as the "Elephant of Zaïre": in earlier days with Empire Bakuba, he was likely to be pictured in the company of EK's pygmy dancer. His present partnerships with ex-Quartier École singer Nyboma, or producer-guitarist Souzy Kassey, among others, are less popworld gimmicky, even if his subject matter ("Roger Milla", about the Cameroonian football-wiggle superstar) isn't. It's hard not to feel that the opening to Western markets, and the chance of selling all over again to outsiders what's already thrilled Zaïrean youth, hasn't somewhat frozen Paris-based Kinshasa-pop's for-itself development in its mid-80s manifestation: this grooves brightly and excellently, but Kallé's big, tight voice aside, the best of *Larger Than Life* isn't really anything Kanda Bongo Man fans haven't heard, or at least intuited, and the rest is a

little flabby. Guitars twinkle and circle tightly, drums prick out an ineluctable near-machine pulse, the big man exhorts in shoues, pleads in song; but synthesiser encroaches, ushering in a kind of generic (non locale-specific) Afro-ricktock ballad, as also heard, to much better effect on . . .

Lo's non-debut debut *Ismael Lo*, his first set to be licensed through a transnational major (Barclay via Mango/Island via Polygram). The opening mouthharp wail and acoustic guitar as much as the directed subject matter ("Raciste") give this collection a curiously attractive 60s feel, in spite of the now-ubiquitous production overglow. In a sense, this is a better record – more consistent, at least – than many of his countryman Youssou N'Dour's more ambitiously groundbreaking "global" statements. Lo's soft and voice is less dramatic; his arrangements often less rhythmically gripping; but the twist he gives what ought to be a quickest and perhaps understanding crossover approach ends up on it, in spite of maybe because of the fact that it constantly threatens to tip over into MOR French folkpop, but doesn't.

Biggie Tembo, former frontman for the Bhandu Boys, whose chewed-up-and-spit-out story he's now stepped out of (an object lesson in worstcase outcomes of careless flirtation with multinationals), records once again at Harare's legendary Shed Studio. Being in the antiprurist minority who felt Bhandu records actually got better the more access they had to modern technology, I'm pleased to report that Biggie hasn't fallen into any obvious Luddite traps with *Out Of Africa*; I also prefer the reflective, sadder-but-wiser sound he's opted for (his former group's with-hindsight soon-wearing upfulness grows badly on replay), it suits his appreciation of his own situation quite as much as his overview of his nation's present and future ("Harare Jit") – cautious optimism mixed with much wariness. A stronger record than the claims it makes for itself.

Papa Wemba, founder of 70s *sablon* young turks Zaïko Langa Langa, former Kinshasa fashion-god and scene-maker, gained a rep as a name in the Authentic movement: the blandishments of a certain international celebrityhood may beckon, but he stays truer than many to earlier declarations (although "authentic" may not mean what we First Worlders quite expect: Wemba's original chosen pop-moniker was *Joli Prestige*). He may be as close as this now-senior teeming creative generation has to a commanding elder statesman (in the mould,

that is, of such pantheon-overtoppers as Franco or Tabu Ley). *Le Voyageur* is in its way something of a bid for suitable acknowledgement, by outflanking appeal to a world audience via Gabriel's Realworld, and as such ultimately vulnerable (though very probably not quite yet) to more local challenge. His voice is still his fortune – as high and limber as M'Bilia Bel's, or very nearly – but the professional seamlessness of this Paris-programmed sound, however authentic its flavours and beats, however it tweaks itself away from *sablon* ordinaire (lots of dramatically unusual openings, as on "Yoko" or "Zero" . . .), is mostly simply addressing the wrong constituency (. . . collapsing into routine as soon as he begins to sing).

MARK SINKER

JIMMY KNEPPER QUINTET



Dream Dancing

Cross Cross Jazz 1024 CD

FOR THOSE pondering the relevance of the trombone in jazz today – other than in the massed ranks of the big band or to provide an element of the slapstick in free jazz – Jimmy Knepper offers a few answers. Not the definitive sicily-writing a sax or trumpet can conjure up, but with the gravity and solemn intent of a tortoise seeking to hand out a lesson to the hare. There's no room for surface gloss with a trombone – you've got to be saying something, or else it really does sound like the most uninteresting instrument in the world. Jimmy Knepper never blows himself blue to make a point, never runs when he can walk and always tries to arrange his solos with the most interesting notes uppermost. It's all part of his cunning plan to make the trombone intriguing, by luring you into the heart

of his improvisations.

His beguiling style will never win him a major record deal, yet he's nevertheless remained fashionably unfashionable, largely as a result of his tenure with Charles Mingus. For a neat and orderly jazz public who like their musicians to come plainly labelled. Knepper has somehow defied categorisation, and still remained firmly implanted in the mainstream. *Dream Dancing* — a 1986 date — allows him licence to unlock some of the mysteries of the trombone alongside the then fast-rising young star of the Horace Silver Quintet, Ralph Moore. Although tonally a bit monotonous, they marshal their resources through counterpoint, unison and harmony while Knepper remains on the bass-line forcing the youngster to run around the court. It just goes to show that except in the right hands the trombone is the most underex-

plained instrument in jazz today.

tonalities with his regular saxophone as well. Alf Forsman's drumming is often the key to the music, a low, intermittent throb that doesn't so much keep time as suggest normal time has been suspended. Bassist Uffe Krokfor has little prominent role, in some respects, but it's he who holds at least the more jazz-oriented tracks together.

Bjorkenheim has devised an astonishing range of sound effects, hammering on, pull-offs, bowing and pedalling, creating a sound that, as on "Little Big Horn", creates a broodingly mysterious presence. This and the long, jazz-based "Volition", apparently intended as a tribute to Coltrane and Garbarek, and prominently featuring Takamaki on tenor, are the two most impressive things on a remarkably compressed and coherent session. Full marks to *Wirm Lake* for getting such a well-modulated sound.

BRIAN MORTON



plotted instrument in jazz today.

STUART NICHOLSON

KRAKATOU

Volition

ECM 1466 CD/LP

RAOUL BJORKENHEIM has moved out of Edward Vesala's shadow with this record. Krakatou have always sounded much more free-form and abstract than Vesala's Sound & Fury outfit. On *Volition*, Bjorkenheim and producer Steve Lake keep the guitar somewhat in the background, where it provides dark, rather threatening swell over heavy, resonant percussion and Jone Takamaki's increasingly non-Western array of winds. Of these, the krakatou (a chunk of organ pipe with a bantone mouthpiece) and toppophone (wire-casing with fingerholes and a tenor reed) are the most obviously non-standard, but he gets a bizarre range of timbres and

KUHN/NAUSEEF/NEWTON/ TADIC

Let's Be Generous

CMP CD 53 CD

KEYBOARD PLAYER Joachim Kuhn, drummer Mark Nauseef, bassman Tony Newton, and guitarist Miroslav Tadic make a serious declaration of intent in the frenetic opening tune of this set, running Eric Dolphy's "The Prophet" (he recorded it with Booker Little in 1961) into twelve minutes of manic, metallic marlstrom.

Nauseef pounds out a juggernaut drum track behind the careering, colliding guitar and electronic keyboards, sometimes tangled together in a single mutant voice, sometimes battering at each other from diametrically opposed corners, but always plunging relentlessly onwards, checked only by the intermittent statements of Dolphy's quirky theme.

It is a mode they employ several times, including Kuhn's "Always Yours", the buzz-saw attack of Newton's "Snake Oil", and the concluding group composition "Kissing The Feet", although without quite the same degree of unrestrained abandon. Elsewhere, the emphasis is on off-centre funk in "The Captain and I" or "Don't Disturb My Groove" (both Kuhn), or gentler, more obviously textural explorations, as in the variegated percussion and electronic noises of Tadic's "Avant Garde" or Nauseef's "Bintang".

Dolphy's "Something Sweet, Something Tender" from *Out To Lunch* is neither, although it does briefly bring the tempera-

ture down a little. This isn't one of those records with PLAY LOUD plastered on the sleeve, but that is clearly exactly what is intended. They certainly do.

KENNY MATHIESON

STEVE LACY

Live At Sweet Basil

Novus PD90647 CD

STEVE LACY is held in high regard by all kinds of people whose opinion I respect, but on this showing such regard is misplaced. The idea was to catch his group being rhythmic and infectious: "I wanted to make a live record just for that, to show that the band *swing*". The result is a sloppy sub-Monk shambles. Lacy scores elsewhere as a rather self-conscious instigator of jazz modernism, but this attempt at rosy fare is a disaster.

Irene Aebi's singing replays all of the worst images of jazz: nightclubs, faded fashion, pigeonholes, boredom. When she comes back with the tune on "Prospectus" her voice is mixed so high — and is so dubiously pitched — you can only wince. "The Bath" evokes the yawdiness of Bird with strings. Lacy and Steve Ports indulge in much Coltrane-like rushing up and down the arpeggios, but they still keep to the changes. It's like a polite dinner party that cannot rise above small talk.

The rhythm section, though, is excellent — evidently the reason for Lacy wanting to document his group a-swing. On "Morning Joy" Bobby Few plays some real piano. Jean-Jacques Avenel shows on "The Bath" that he is a wondrous bass player — stinky and vertical yet also far and chordal — while John Bersch's drum solo on "Morning Joy" provides the most musical moment on offer. But they can do nothing with Lacy's dullness of concept.

Pursuing convention with less aplomb than most run-of-the-mill neo-conservatives, Steve Lacy deserves a spanking.

BEN WATSON

LEVITATION

Need For Not

Rough Trade R2 862 MC/LP/CD

LEVITATION HARBOUR a healthy interest in insanity. They cosset their wayward high-pitched guitar riffs in a downy featherbed of jangle whilst the meandering keyboards chide them. Propelled by a surf of speed metal and myriad allusions to half-forgotten

idols like Hawkwind, and even – stripped of reactionary self-importance – Rush, *Nad For Now* is flamboyant rock with an earnest message at its core, the one about the danger facing our Mother Earth.

Nurturing a "message" Levitation-style is potentially disastrous, but lead guitarist and vocalist Terry Bickers manages to invest the whole affair with humour. Just listen to some of those ProgRock cries and yelps. Levitation actually get away with reject Yes song-titles like "Atcs of Dew and Light" and "Coterie". Their mix of conspiracy-theory paranoia and eco-grebo idealism may take time to digest but their taunts at the establishment are comic rather than threatening.

"Smile" – their live showpiece – is here reworked into a cooler, distanced slice of melancholic resignation; they're coming to terms, it seems, with their own appeal. The thing is, does the world at large have time to lend its ears to Levitation's tongue-in-cheek hectoring, even with Vic Reeves on their side?

SAM BATRA

CHARLES LLOYD

Notes From Big Sur

ECM 1465 CD

IN THE 60s, Charles Lloyd was lambasted by the critics for sounding like John Coltrane. Now everybody sounds like Coltrane and Lloyd has one of the most identifiable saxophone tones in jazz. It's also one of the most beautiful, a haunting sound that with the passage of time is now one of jazz's genuine individual voices. In live performance Lloyd seems to caress the notes from his saxophone, each one gentle yet pure, reconciling his peaceful, spiritual concerns with a fluid melodicism that seeks not to compete but to communicate inner peace and tranquility.

Notes From Big Sur is his second album for ECM and continues his association with Swedish pianist Bo Sorenson. On bass he has Anders Jormin with Ralph Peterson on drums; the inclusion of Peterson – a sympathetic yet electric accompanist – provides an element of creative tension that was missing from *Fish Out Of Water* (1989). Much like Jack De Johnette, who occupied the drum chair for Lloyd in the sixties, he is a model of interactive support who always manages to come up with the unexpectedly right.

Lloyd is a musician who can be returned to time and again; there is always something in his playing that is never revealed at first. Like his own forest flower, his playing gra-

dually opens and reveals a little more of itself on every hearing. Few musicians sound as unburied as Lloyd, a repository of peace in a mad, mad world.

STUART NICHOLSON

MAIN

Hydra-Calm

Situation 7 SIT L39 CD

BRIAN ENO has finally dozed off (lulled by cash registers tingling); The Orb, The Grid, Orbital and the rest are eagerly reproducing Tangerine Dream's worst excesses; Ambient Music would seem to have lost touch with its immediate surroundings (thus somewhat missing its own point). Relegated to chill-out rooms in clubs full of silicon age hippies hoping to rave away the recession, it's in danger of codding up the fashionable Muzak of the merely greedy.

Enter Main, formed by Robert Hampson and Scott Dawson in 1991 (who'd just disbanded their previous band, Loop, at the peak of its commercial success). More Ice Age than New Age, the pair align themselves with such contemporary composers as Thomas Koener, Paul Giger or Dumitrescu as much as anyone: merge makers who aim to stretch out tension to the very end. Main create dense soundscapes which gleefully incorporating waves of distortion, digital delays, echo and reverb, effects whose names alone evoke the overwhelming world of media blitz.

The opening track, "Flametracer", is the sound of Loop's skin being shed, a slow-motion drone that refuses to rock out. "Time Out (Dub)" is a hashed-out Kraftwerk, the simultaneous playing of many guitars through many racks of delays. This is followed by "Suspension", a sustained guitar chord sabotaged by manipulated decay rates – as it hints at infinities, it's further interfered with by an unintelligible voice ghosting back and forth. It becomes clear that this kind of separating and dissection of *Hydra-Calm's* individual tracks is senseless. The oppressive, illusory moods which prevail conspire to swamp all perceptual discrimination, leaving memory of individual sounds or songs difficult to locate. This is a music that envelopes, like the claustrophobic calm before the storm.

Ambient power need not be a contradictory concept: AMM's 1966, *Byrne/Eno's My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts*, Neubauten's *Drawings Of Patient O*, and Jon Hassell's *City: Works Of Fiction* sound as compelling now as when they first appeared. They all simul-

taneously trap and trigger the imagination. And Main can too, conjuring the alien atmosphere which surrounds familiar times, familiar places, where surface calm is eroded by underlying tension: the nervous system is alerted, the intellect unable to work out why. *Hydra-Calm* is as breath-taking as it's disturbing: the sound of guitar-rock melted down, and, in its fluid state, frozen.

K. MARTIN

BUDDY MONTGOMERY

Live At Maybeck Rectoral Hall Vol. 15

Concord C-4194 CDMC

BUDDY MONTGOMERY's is a name that is known, if at all, by association. Younger brother of Wes, he played with him in the Mastersounds and then the Montgomery Brothers in the late 50s and early 60s. For a



VOLUME FIFTEEN

few months in 1960 he was pianist in a transitional line-up of the Miles Davis quintet. Since then he has been away from the centres of jazz activity until a return as leader on two albums in the late 80s.

He now has a regular hotel gig in New York City, which must mean he can put in a lot of hours of playing time. On this intriguing addition to the excellent Maybeck solo piano series, Buddy shows a full, developed solo style – and that implies the influence of Tatum and the masters of swing era piano, a modified stride with modern harmonies. He hasn't anything like the accuracy in articulation of the best pianist technicians, and there are split notes and fumbled runs. As it doesn't seem he's rusty, I guess that's just him; but the integrity and affection in the music make you pass that over.

The choice of songs is unusual, with a lot of lesser known "standards". Some also are

very old – Irving Berlin's waltz "What'll I Do", here transformed into a bluesy 4/4, and Fletcher Henderson's "Soft Winds". "The Night Has A Thousand Eyes" is a wonderful song that is mostly played fairly straight. The one Montgomery original is "Money Blues", and here Buddy's roots in the blues, in case you hadn't guessed before, are prominent. A very rewarding issue in a series that looks like it will run and run – and we are yet to have Paul Bley, Andrew Hill, Cedar Walton, Geri Allen . . . ANDY HAMILTON

JOHN MORAN

The Manson Family

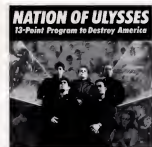
Point 432 965-2 CD

If CHARLES MANNON hadn't failed his audition for The Monkees, if *Chorus* – *The Movie*, the never-made Hollywood biopic on which

Unsurprisingly, *The Manson Family* has made its 26-year-old Nebraska composer NYC's most recent enfant terrible. Subject matter aside, the opera is simply the latest challenge to definitions of opera, so it is apposite that this is released by Philip Glass's Point label. *The Manson Family* is an opera in much the same way as Glass's *Eisenstein* was an opera – which is not to say they share any stylistic points beyond an innovative approach to total music-theatre. Moran's compositional technique uses cut-up tapes, samples from TV soundtracks and voices that declaim rather than sing in any conventional way. Iggy Pop gurgles his way – *Spectrotime*-style – through his role as Prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi. Terry Roche takes on Squeaky Fromme; standing at the vortex itself, Moran is Mannon.

The collaged, impressionist narrative is all the more chilling for its recognisable references. Snatches of The Beatles' *White Album* are recreated as contributory texts (somehow it's hard to imagine Michael Jackson, the copyright holder of the Fab Four's catalogue approving direct sampling). *Loony Tunes*-ish links stress a further familiarity. This marks not just a further episode in America's continuing preoccupation with Manson, but for Moran, a dark and important debut.

LOUISE GRAY



TRISTAN MURAIL

Allegories/Vues aériennes/Territoires de l'oubli

Accord 200642 CD

he'd been employed as charisma consultant had happened, the world would be a different place. The Tate-LaBianca murders might never have happened, America's collection of latter-day bogymen might lack one of its most potent members, and perhaps this opera – John Moran's first recording – might have been materially different.

That's not to say another family, Mansonite in all but name, would never have happened; this is the question that lies unasked in Moran's compellingly abstract account of Mannon's acid-brained family of adolescent killers. Alongside earlier works (the unteated *Jack Benny's Parsival Vi Room No. 5*), Moran has continually focused on archetypes. So too his approach to sound, his use of samples of everyday sounds – in some ways updating John Adams' folksy quotes – only stresses an extraordinary ordinariness surrounding the murders.

MURAIL STUDIED with Olivier Messiaen and currently researches computer sounds at IRCAM. He makes the transition between acoustic and electric sources seamless. "Allegories" was written for a small orchestra and a Yamaha TX-816 linked to an Apple Mac. Computer sounds may be triggered in real time, thus avoiding the inflexibility foisted on performers by the use of prepared tapes. He continues the tradition of Messiaen's twinkling sonic events, though fine detail polishes away any brashness. Rasping brass provokes agitated string figures and percussive chimes. The music is pretty, complex, crafted: impressionism on CD-ROM.

"Vues aériennes" shows that Murail does not require computers to achieve his shimmering textures. The idea was to show successive views of the same object, like Monet's Rouen cathedral series. A horn

(slowly panned left to right, like the sun over the cathedral) provides much needed focus, as Murail's subtleties are in danger of evaporating into insubstantial wisps.

"Territoires de l'oubli" is a piece for piano that explores rumbling harmonics: the piano conceived as a resonating box rather than shorthand for the orchestra. Repeated stabs on one note bring forth dazzling fireworks, though one's enjoyment is marred by irritation as one note is sounded again and again at the end. We have all been bored enough by La Monte Young and do not want his practices infecting the heartland of the maximal. However, Murail's sensitive ear saves our interest: the piece constitutes a fascinating extension of Debussy's attention to piano sound.

With Murail one misses the scary objectivity of Pierre Boulez or Conlon Nancarrow, the brutal logic of an unstoppable argument. It can all seem too like a *dérivations*. But there are sonic gems you don't get anywhere else.

BEN WATSON

THE NATION OF ULYSSES

13-Point Program To Destroy America

Duchord DB 57V CD

DISCHORD RECORDS' Washington home gives their releases the allure of righteous tapeworms, gnawing away at the vitals of the American body politic. Too many post-hardcore outfits churn out colourless polemics which are a long way from living up to such a promise. Not so The Nation Of Ulysses, who've come up not just with a great title, but also an immaculate sleeve, complete with useful tips on how to mutilate your fingertips. Their thank-you pay respect to the "Fugazi Nation" – that band's esteemed co-bowler and Dischord mainstay Ian Mackaye produced this – and the music does too, but without the obnoxiousness that has crept into Fugazi's work of late, and with a welcome touch of additional warmth from Ian Svenonius' occasional trumpet. Their keenness to dress sharp and look mean raises the dread spectre of The Sid Presley Experience, but only for a moment. This record is fast and funny from start to finish, illuminated by flashes of an amusingly random ideology which seems like a sort of Maoist consumer fetishism. The Nation of Ulysses rail against toothpaste – "Do not wipe the taste of the day away with the false and foreign taste of mint" – and the Q-tip,

"likening societies fear of the waxy build-up to its horror of rawness or integrity in music", as they put it, not unmemorably.

BEN THOMPSON

JOE NEWMAN & JOE WILDER
Hangin' Out

Cascadia CDD-0262 CD/MC

IN AN age when all the big label recording contracts are going to young musicians whose work is firmly planted "in the tradition", it is interesting to examine that tradition from the other end of the telescope, through musicians who represent that tradition because they *are* the tradition. Those surviving practitioners who started out maybe 40 or 50 years ago and who are still going strong, see if their music holds any lessons for jazz today.

Joe Newman, a Basie veteran, and Joe Wilder, a 40s big band stalwart before studio work claimed him, are both advanced swing era musicians rather than boppers *per se*. Chronologically, they're more in the orbit of Roy Eldridge than direct descendants of Louis Armstrong or Dizzy Gillespie. Today very few musicians choose to play in that style; it's as if the history of jazz began with bop. But what is clear from Wilder and Newman is the importance of individuality. Both have their own tone, once a possession cherished above all in jazz, but now lost among scurrying semi-quavers and blistering tempos.

Both too, insist on a sapient lyricism. Listen to "Secret Love" or "Here's That Rainy Day". They're not just playing through the changes, they're inventing new melodies based on the old, they're paraphrasing, they're inverting phrases, above all they're creating a personal statement. Maybe jazz should be looking further back into its past to rediscover these values.

STUART NICHOLSON

SAM NEWSOME
Sam I Am

Cross Cross Jazz 1056 CD

SAM NEWSOME's purposeful tenor sax playing strode into view on last year's eponymously titled album from Terence Blanchard, where he played on three cuts. He alternated with Branford Marsalis who by no

means outclassed the newcomer. And so here on Newsome's debut album as a leader is a powerful voice who, on this showing, sounds as if he has the tone, the ideas and the technique to be a front runner as the decade progresses.

Refreshingly, Newsome does not burden us with an album of his "original" compositions – something that so many young musicians feel they have to do to show everyone where they're at musically. This faulty logic has let down countless records over the last decade, giving us the as yet unrounded improviser and inadequate composer all in one package. Historically the jazz improviser has rarely made much of a composer – not even Ellington topped the achievements of the finest Broadway writers.

Newsome wisely works out on Strayhorn's "Intimacy Of The Blues" and "Upper Manhattan Medical Group", Sonny Rollins's "Pent Up House", Mercer-Van Heusen's "I Thought About You" and the old war-horse "Indiana". By letting his imagination rip on established repertoire he brings us closer to the musician than any amount of "originals" that have obsolescence built in them from bar one. With the ubiquitous Steven Nelson on vibes and Mulgrew Miller on piano, this is a memorable debut from a genuine tough tenor.

STUART NICHOLSON

PAVEMENT
Slanted And Enchanted
Big Cat ABB34 CD

ON FIRST hearing, and probably second too, this sounds intensely derivative. Not in a lacklustre way – Pavement have talent to burn – but sparkily; flitting capriciously up and down different post-Velvet alleyways, echoing old misery-guts Lou himself one moment, and the first Go Betweens album (honest) the next. The name which springs to mind most often, as has been widely remarked, is that of The Fall. "Two States", in particular, seems like a bizarrely blatant attempt to ape *Grotesque*-era Smith & Co. Even the song-titles ("No Life Singed Here", "Zurich Is Stained") have that Fallish folk-music of weird crossword anagrams, but displaced across the Atlantic, and not so happily overlaid with meaning and bitterness.

Fortunately Pavement have other gifts, not least among them a knack for breezy melodic fuzz, to make them more than just a

well-worn path. So if, as seems likely, they become outrageously popular, it won't be a bad thing. Why would you need to sound like The Fall if you came from California? This is a question only Pavement themselves can answer. Perhaps it doesn't matter why; the very fact of wanting to seems to be enough.

BEN THOMPSON

DON PULLEN

Kale Mow Bana

Blue Note CDP 7 98166 2 CD

PULLEN's new band, the African-Brazilian Connection, is a project that he has wanted to realise for several years. He has always been interested in intermixing modern black American genres with elements from the African and Brazilian traditions which have



helped shape them. For *Kale Mow Bana* he has brought together two percussionists, Mor Thiam from Senegal and Gualtherme Franco from Brazil, with Franco's countryman, bassist Nilson Matta, and American saxophonist Carlos Ward. They inspire Pullen to some of his freshest piano-playing for a while.

I have aired my antipathy towards Latin music before in these pages: childhood exposure to *Come Dancing* is hard to get out of the system and there are parts of this album which conjure up visions of be-sequestered frilly frocks from the Home Counties North. These are rare enough, though, and there is always Ward's astringent alto and the African thread to maintain credibility. Actually, the Brazilian strain makes a commendable showing too: Franco's "Capoeira" and Nitta's "L.V.M./Directo Ad Assunto" – phew, not a scotchier – are highlights of the album. Thiam also contributes a couple of exciting

pieces, "Cimili" and the title tune. Pullen's two originals, "Listen To The People" and "Doo-Wop Daze", are the least enjoyable pieces, but his playing is, despite some florid introductions and Cecil Taylor-esque cascades, simple and repetitive, exactly right for the music, driving it forward over the airy but insistent percussion. **BARRY WITHERDEN**

HOSSAM RAMZY AND HIS EGYPTIAN ENSEMBLE

Egyptian Rai

ARC Music CD EUCD 1132 CD

OMINOUS... The sleeve note quotes I. Ron Hubbard, and the label operates out of East Grinstead, home of Scientology. Maybe that's some people's idea of the Mystic East. Luckily, cod metaphysics only gets a look in

more touristry than it actually is, but Ramzy himself goes like the thunder, regardless.

JONATHAN ROMNEY

MAX ROACH WITH CHORUS & ORCHESTRA

To The Max!

cap/NJ702122 CD

A DOUBLE CD, room for bebop's founding drummer to unfurl his many current involvements: jazz, choral and string composition and his percussion group M'Boom.

The resonance of a choir is inevitably religious (artless lay expressions of defrauded community), but the John Motley Singers are sharply professional, their buttoned-down discipline and nobly-articulated vowels reminiscent of Carnegie Hall Mahalia Jackson or the chorus of Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess*. Tyrone Brown's bass is recorded well upfront and the results are surprisingly attractive, Ronnell Bey's solo voice sinuous and flamboyant.

The choral piece is part of a suite in three sections called "Ghost Dance". M'Boom performs part two: with percussionists as heavy as Roach himself, timbales legend Ray Mantilla and Joe Chambers (a dazzling third-stream composer in his own right), M'Boom has to be a treat. In the 90s, worldmusic surface trappings have replaced rock sonority as a way of disguising deep-rooted musical conformism: M'Boom prove that Afrocentrism was always part of bebop's modernity. Linear and limpid, Roach's elegance and clarity make it all seem simple. Then, for some reason, a nuclear bomb goes off (I couldn't get much sense out of the libretto). Part three is the hard bop quarter, a briskly swinging vehicle for Odeson Pope's tenor (he's more at home here than with his harmolodic trio, where he falls back on Transients) and Cecil Bridgewater's lovely bright trumpet: sterling, authoritative hard bop.

The Uptown String Quartet, led by Roach's daughter Maxine, integrate beautifully with the improvisors on "A Little Booker". Roach is combining known quantities in *To The Max!*, but he does it with such neatness and spirit that the results are exceptional. No waste and no fuss, just care and sparkle. Each disc ends with a beautiful drum solo, models of wit and economy.

BEN WATSON

DINO SALUZZI

Mojotaro

ECM 1447 51192 CD/LP

THE BANDONEON — a German accordion — is Dino Saluzzi's instrument. There's not many people that know this, but the bandoneon gets its name from Heinrich Band of Krefeld, who invented it in the 1840s. It migrated to South America after 1900 to become a solo instrument in the tango orchestras of Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil; and also, bizarrely, figured in early West African high-life ensembles (perhaps through the Kaiser's empire in the sun).

Its plangent tones dominate *Mojotaro*, in the composer's words, "a cultural symbiosis", drawing on tango, Andina music (Bolivia) and Candombe (Uruguay). Dino, born in 1935 in Argentina, grew up in the tango bands, but from 1970 worked with Gato Barbieri in a jazz-folk fusion idiom, though I don't think he was involved in *Last Tango In Paris* (where's Gato now, by the way?). In the 80s he toured and recorded with Palle Mikkelborg and Charlie Haden, hence his entrée to ECM. (You're getting all this because there's no information on the sleeve *fasted* — Ed.).

This is haunting, beautifully crafted music, perhaps inspired by the "classic" style of Astor Piazzolla's new tango. The eerie "Mundos", at over 10 minutes the longest composition, aims at the seriousness of art music, but my preference is for the shorter, more lyrical tango pieces. "Lustrin" and "Viernes Santo" are as beautiful as the best of Piazzolla, though often with a stronger beat. All those falling, dying minor harmonies; yeah, it's great. As Dino says, truly and without false modesty, "it does not fall into common eclecticism. It is vital and real beyond the conventions". **ANDY HAMILTON**

**SILVA/TURNER/LOBKO/
PETIT/GIRARD**

Take Some Risks

In Situ 590011 CD

DENIS COLIN

Clarinet Basses Seal

In Situ 590036 CD

LAZRO/DONEDA/NINH

Lazro/Doneda/Ninh

In Situ 590037 CD

LEANDRE/ZINGARO

Escrituras

In Situ 590038 CD



on the last track, a fituously ethereal outing with keyboardist Michael England. The rest is more robust stuff, helmed — but not really dominated — by percussionist Ramzy. The title's misleading — this is nothing like 'Rai', nor if you're looking for the cheesy keyboards and tail-chasing drum patterns of the Algerian stuff. Instead, says the sleeve note, this is 'Rai' in the sense of the Arabic word meaning 'opinion' — if you like, it's trad with attitude. It's traditional pan-Arabic acoustic stuff, anyway, culled from Kuwait, Morocco, Lebanon and elsewhere, and the only crossover with Algerian styling is the very feathery trumpet sound of Samy El-Babli, which dominates the proceedings, along with a keening bamboo flute. Occasional funk bass is the only attempt to raise the ante — sometimes apposite, sometimes gratuitously fusion-esque. The sleeve shoe of the Grand Pyramid suggests it's all going to be a little

FOUR FROM the new French label In Situ. "No added effects" is their slogan. To emphasize this documentary realism (already indicated by the label's name), the date of recording plays a prominent role in the design of their smart red sleeves. Impeccable digital sound captures real musicians in real-time.

Take Some Risks, recorded live in Paris (23/11/86), has the benefit of Alan Silva's gorgeous free jazz bass and percussionist Roger Turner's snappy vivacity. A 45 minute set with an eight minute encore, the instruments enter one by one, dizzily tuned to different stations. Misha Lobko eschews the clarinet's usual cool classicism for the gabbles and squawks of a free saxophonist. Bruno Girard (violin) is equally willing to push his violin to extremes. He forces the music into a keening climax, then it breaks into quacking clarinet and Silva's big plucked bass. There is a fantastic sense of melody and punch, an openness that demands participation so urgently the rush is giddy. When the others leave off you hear Turner's amazing variety of different rhythms running on like separate motors. An exciting forecast of Turner and Silva's British tour in December.

Clarinet Base Seal is (surprise) solo bass clarinet. Denis Colin is not a bad player, but in this format sounds very much a poor-man's Dolphy. Unjustly slurred as "overman" in *Wire* 93, Braxton's *For Alto* paid tribute to Dolphy by taking his idea of solo recital to further extremes of the instrument. Colin's limited range of effects (overblowing, buzzing) merely colour his lines, which are often banal vapors (the kind usually played on panpipes in filmscores). Solo improvisation requires either impotence with its own ideas (Derek Bailey, Lol Coxhill) or a sense of rhapsody and excess (David Murray, Billy Bang). This has neither.

Lazzro/Dondal/Ninh (26/1/88) is like an evening spent with a couple of symphony saxophonists who consume a bottle of gin at a dockside cafe and then proceed to play misremembered sea-shanties whilst accompanying themselves by kicking dustbins around. It's great. Percussionist Le Quan Ninh has played John Cage and it shows in his lopsided rhythms and penchant for metal. Michael Doneda (soprano) and Daunik Lazzro (alto) are gutsy and direct. Maybe their playing is finally too formal to reach all possible interstices, but winning knockabout stuff nonetheless.

Erasmus (29/5/90) features two players known for their virtuoso techniques (though

this may stem from their classical backgrounds, where such things are easily calibrated). Someone should tell bassist Joelle Leandre not to sing: her Meredith-Monkisms smother Carlos Zingaro's violin in new-age churchiness. When they take off, the dialogues are dazzling, though too often they end up in folksy Bartokian jigs. After the advances made by improvising string players (Leroi Jenkins, Fred Hopkins) this stuff sounds safe and dated (i.e. not where Leandre and Zingaro think they are).

The series is cursed with uninformative and pretentious sleeve notes (M. Pepaud's "poetry") but, given the quality DDD sound and well placed mikes, it is safe to say that if you like these musicians you will like these discs. BEN WATSON

OTIS SPANN/LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS

The Complete Candid Sessions

MOBIC M-139 5 LPs or 5 CDs

THEY SEEM strange bedfellows as they struggle together in the debut LP-sized box: Spann the Mississippian émigré to Chicago, famed as Muddy Waters' band pianist and with only two recordings as leader under his belt before these 1960 sessions; and Hopkins, the seasoned Texan king of the juke-joints, transformed into the darling of the coffee-house and concert-hall, with literally hundreds of recordings behind him.

Spann must vie with Sunnyland Slim for the title of perfect accompanist; but whereas Sunnyland as a leader was rarely exciting, the first two CDs show that Spann made the transition with no apparent effort. He is abetted here on many tracks by the jazzi-phrased guitar of Robert Lockwood, and on some by the flagging tones of St. Louis Jimmy Oden (Lockwood meshes perfectly with the pianist on numbers like "Great Northern Stomp" and Oden's world-weary singing enhances the deep Southern aura of his compositions like "Going Down Slow"). Evidence of his potential as a band leader comes in "Walking The Blues", for example, where, in the barrelhouse tradition, he plays so much piano that accompaniment would be superfluous. Over a big, rolling and densely-textured left-hand rhythm, the right hand states themes boldly and with beautiful clarity. "I taste the blues in my blood", he says in "Talking The Blues"; it's a taste which lingers long and bittersweet.

Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins was an enigmatic

Texan who, as his career playing blues for black audiences waned, in his late 40s and with no apparent effort eased into the folk bluesman role which would win him international acclaim at the last of the original blues singers. In reality, of course, he was no such thing: certainly he could play and sing pre-war blues from first-hand recollection, but he was a consummate guitarist, a grainy-voiced singer, and an adept and prolific composer. At his many sessions, he would be as likely to perform a song composed five minutes previously or 30 years ago.

His late 1960 Candid session yielded 14 tracks, of which five, not notably inferior to the others, see the light of day here for the first time. The performances capture him near the apex of his form, whether he's sketching the eldritch lonesome-highway scene of "Rainy Highway", opening his



throat to enunciate a deep, dark blues like "Trouble Blues", lightening the mood with his jolly tale of two washerwomen "going around doing the rooby-roo" or knocking out a skittish "Piano Boogie". On two numbers, he contrives to play piano and guitar simultaneously, but his keyboard skill has to take second place to his guitar work with its insistent, droning bass and tracery of taut embellishments. MIKE ATHERTON

THE STARS OF FAITH

Live At Montreux

Black and Blue 39 186 CD

THE GOSPEL SINGERS

Gospel Emotions

Bellaphon LR44016 CD

GOSPEL OCCUPIES a special place in the evolu-

tion of black consciousness. The first black educational establishment in the US, Fisk University, was financed by the tours of the Jubilee Quartet. In 1871, the *New York Tribune* reported: "The wild melodies of these emancipated slaves touched the fount of tears, and grey-haired men wept like little children . . . We have long enough had its coarse caricatures in corked faces, our people can now listen to the genuine soul-music of the slave cabins."

The Jubilee Quartet had tapped a vein of gold. Over the next 120 years, of course, capitalism ensured that such profits accrued to the usual recipients, establishing on the way an intimate link between black music and saleable excitement. However, gospel's roots in the religious community meant that it remained relatively unscathed by the commercial streamlining of its secular counter-

part with members from the Cameroons, Trinidad, Jamaica and the States. Liberals like to sentimentalize the diaspora, but in this instance it is no guarantee of cultural coherence: the arrangements are finicky, the net result Gospel-on-Broadway. When they get going the beat is impersonal and oppressive, the singing pinched and hard, the arrangements meretricious: a far cry from the downhome expressionism of The Stars Of Faith.

BEN WATSON

STEVE SWALLOW

Swallow

Xtra/Watt 6 CD

There was a time when Steve Swallow shared Carla Bley's visionary voyage aboard her escalator hillside. There was music that challenged and in so doing made history, belligerently stood against consumerism and its canned, processed value system. Bley and her fearless band jarred our received notions by setting up diametrically opposed musicians to a common musical aim. The results fascinated, as much by the mix as the match. Several years on, Ms Bley and Mr Swallow are now an item, and it's all matching with no mixing. Ain't we good friends? among the family snaps, Gary Burton, John Scofield, Hiram Bullock and Don Alias. It seems like the sonic escalator has come to rest. It's ended up where all great journeys begin and end, in the supermarket.

Swallow is an album of stewed funk with all the harmful "E" additives removed; energy, entertainment and enlightenment. Nice uncontroversial muzak to soothe the troubled nerves pushing the silver trolley up and down the aisles. "Soca Symphony" for that magic moment at the delicatessen counter when you ponder the relative merits of *fromage frats* on Philadelphia. "Doin' It Slow" to help you through those anxious moments putting your life on the line purchasing butter instead of marger.

Don't Steve and Carla make such a happy couple? Steve used to play a mean bass, and Carla, she used to be a real avant gardier. But that was years ago. Well, everyone's young once. Now you've got to be sensible. Earn your living properly. None of this jazz business. And ooh look, how nice, there's Carla's little daughter Karen on synthesizer. What a lovely little family group they make. How nice and cosy and doesn't it make you want to puke?

STUART NICHOLSON

TRIO HENK DE JONGE

Jumping Shark

BVH/Bass CD 9103 CD

This will probably get lost in the mountain of jazz releases which continues to pour out of the pressing plants, but not necessarily into the shops. That would be a pity, because it is actually a rather fine, unrelentingly vigorous set.

Henk de Jonge has been the pianist in the anarchic Dutch outfit the Willem Breuker Kollektief for a number of years, and Breuker's influence is evident in the music here. So, too, is his physical presence, the Trio is completed by the excellent Ernst Glerum on bass, and drummer Rob Verdunnen, but is augmented on all but two cuts by either Breuker or American saxophonist Alex Coke, and often both.

The pianist, who composed all the tunes except Coke's lively "Green Acres Jump", is a thrilling and inventive player. He comes at jazz and improvised music from a background in classical music and theatre, but these influences are largely assimilated into the improvisational idiom common to all five players. The occasional exception, as in his solo towards the end of "Lake A Fish In Deep Water", serves to prove the rule.

I haven't come across Coke before, but his acerbic attack and fertile imagination would lead me to expect to do so again. Breuker is, well, Breuker, but with the emphasis on the avant-garde improviser of earlier days, rather than the vaudeville of more recent versions of the Kollektief.

KENNY MATHIESON

VIKTOR ULLMANN

The Terezin Music Anthology Volume 1

Koch 3-7109-2H1 CD

ERWIN SCHULHOFF

Setet

EMI CDC 7 54313 2 CD

Hyperion CDA66516 CD

THEODOR ADORNO doubted whether poetry was possible after Auschwitz, but the point is that poetry is not only possible but necessary. The wonder is not that art after Auschwitz exists, but that it existed *during* Auschwitz and all it stood for. The Viktor Ullmann collection is the first in a series, the Terezin Music Anthology, of music composed in Terezin (Theresienstadt), a Nazi transit camp where 30,000 Jews died.

The Nazis claimed Terezin as a Paradise



parts.

Which is why, to return to the review in hand, the Montreux Jazz audience took so wholeheartedly to The Stars Of Faith in 1983. The nucleus of the Clara Ward Singers in the 50s, these voices achieve the real in-the-throat intensity that soul — and hence all pop — continually flirts with. Accompaniment is a minimal thump (both CDs feature guest drummers, a practice unthinkable in other genres) and excellent piano by Nelson Fortune. In "Jesus Is All The World To Me" the spoken confession of faith is almost aggressively corny, but who cares in a song which uses the "mama bought a chicken, thought it was a duck" rhythm beloved of lewd downhome bluesmen like John Lee Hooker? The music is direct, free-wheeling, explosive, ragged — terrific, in fact.

The Jackson Singers are drawn from the congregation of a black church in Frankfurt,

Ghetto where Jewish culture flourished, but they intended that culture to provide a smokescreen. Art is often used as a cosmetic, but never so repellently. Still, music, even opera, was composed and performed: art is also an act of resistance. A friend and pupil of Schoenberg, Viktor Ullmann was a major figure in European music until the Nazis occupied Czechoslovakia. He was sent to Terezin in 1942 and "asked" to devote his time to music. He wrote an opera, *The Emperor of Atlantis*, chamber and orchestral music, and an essay, *Goethe and Ghetto*, which questioned the very basis of European culture. In 1944 he was sent to Auschwitz, where he died in the gas chamber. His music has not exactly been hidden from view, but this collection is valuable both musically and historically.

The temptation is to try to hear the music as coded resistance – possible with the opera, difficult if not impossible with the three piano sonatas and single string quartet here. His work displays the emotional discipline characteristic of the European avant-garde of the time, but continually undercut by an exuberance that may take the form of dance or march rhythms, or of an expansive lyricism. The Sixth piano is movingly played by Edith Krasa, who gave the work its premiere in Terezin in 1943 – an added poignancy in a substantial and stimulating collection.

Erwin Schulhoff died in Wulzburg concentration camp in 1942. In the years before his arrest, his music mingled experimentalism with a populism that could see him work as a jazz pianist as well as compose a setting of *The Communist Manifesto*. Like Ullmann, history has not completely passed him by, but nor has it celebrated him. Now within a few weeks of each other we have two new recordings of his 1924 Sextet. It's a tough piece, making its initial impact with a Beethovenian drift towards silence. For EMI the Wiener Streichsextett plays it fast and furious, while for Hyperion the Raphael Ensemble's more measured approach allows more of the music to emerge. Both performances are utterly committed, and choice might be dictated by each group's selection for the rest of the CD – Beethoven (including his big quintet) for EMI, Martinu for Hyperion. Both come with excellent sleeve notes.

We still only have a shadowy notion of the art buried by the Nazis, especially the music. Decca has announced a series, *Entartete Musik* (Perverted Music), of works suppressed or rejected by the Third Reich. These works by Ullmann and Schulhoff are important in

their own right, and as insistent *aides-mémoire*.

NICK KIMBERLEY

BENNIE WALLACE

The Free Will

emp 3065 2 CD

TENOR/N'RHYTHM from 1980 in CD transfer, and the old format dressed up with a few fresh licks to come out looking good again. Mainly because Wallace refuses to take a Trane-tide and draws from less common sources. The title track opens with the kind of statements you might expect but then slyly reminds you of a straight-ahead 12-bar, whilst the closing "Paslom", after a similar free-form demo, takes its time from somewhere in the region of Indiana. No matter, Wallace stands back and flings phrases at them like Jackson Pollock with a couple of gallons of Dulux to spare. There are hints of Sonny Rollins in his avant-garde period, and more than just a touch of Archie Shepp at times, let alone the elegant references to late-period Ben Webster on "Sophisticated Lady", but you get the feeling that Wallace wouldn't thank you for pointing it out – the main thing is to get it on with that cavernous sound and give the audience its money's worth.

He's got a classy rhythm section to assist him in this endeavour. Tommy Flanagan is at his best as the cool-as-cucumber piano foil to Wallace's exuberance. Eddie Gomez strums his bass whilst Dappet Dan Richmond flashes his cymbals at every opportunity. At 44 minutes there probably isn't anything the original LP didn't have, but I've heard lots of CDs that go on longer for less return.

JACK COOKE

CASSELL WEBB

House Of Dreams

Chim Records WOLCD 1025 CD

ALTHOUGH WEBB'S PR puff talks of her having been spawned in a "hotbed of radical musical activity", singing with "infamous cult bands" like 13th Floor Elevators and the Red Crayola, it is hard to hear any traces of radicalism in her current recording sound. In the same way that another supposedly radical and super-hip outfit, the Golden Palominos, sounds pleasant but derivative to my ears (so that *Drank With Passion* could be "Bananarama Sing John Cale" (*Wine Winner!* – Ed.)), *House Of Dreams*, with its over-sugared

swooning lyricism, crystal-clear vocals set against washes of gentle electronics and distant tambourines, and melodies often too cute by half, pales by comparison with, say, the work of either Joni Mitchell or Kate and Anna McGarrigle. Indeed the comparisons clearly point to Webb's weaknesses: her songs lack both the trenchant verbal dexterity and genuine emotional subtlety of Mitchell; they also lack the direct unpretentious appeal of the McGarrigles. It's impossible to imagine Webb producing a masterpiece like the sisters' "Leave Me Be" from *Heartbeat Accelerating*, for instance, because her lyrics fatally lack acuity, consisting chiefly of banalities like: "I've crossed the borders between you and me" and "The time has changed as all things go". This is not to deny the plangent loveliness of Webb's voice, or the charm of the album's overall sound, merely



to categorise it not with radical, innovative music but with pleasant but ephemeral pop.

CHRIS PARKER

BEN WEBSTER

There Is No Greater Love

Black Lion BL760151 CD

THIRTY-NINE minutes of the most sensual saxophone of all. Recorded in Copenhagen on 5 September 1965, a year after the veteran tenor player had moved there. Webster may not have had the curiosity (and ego) that made Coleman Hawkins investigate the beboppers and record with Monk, but in his later years he developed a glorious, tender style that is the epitome of caressing saxophone.

The recording is blessed with the presence of Kenny Drew, another American exile,

whose uncluttered, stately style is always informed by the blues. He contributes some beautifully funky block chords to "Close Your Eyes", the sole up-tempo number. Webster remains unruffled, his feathery ardour intact: he quotes a few R&B licks to show that he knows where the music is at, but expertly folds in his own whispered lines. On "I Got It Bad", the famous tune he wrote with Duke Ellington, he milks sax subsonics – the excellent production lets us hear every breath.

Ben Webster's poignancy suspends time, but he has such a keen grasp of the melodies he improvises on that the effect is never directionless or impressionist. There is enough weight in his timbre to make sure the honey is never cloying. The rhythm section (Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass, and Alex Riel, drums) is fine, Pedersen

sell the notion of techno as a virtual trip. Nowadays, techno as the hallucinogen of all audio worlds is really no big news anymore, and yet, on this record, when all place is being dissolved – with text, by music – into McLuhan's idea of acoustic space, the indissoluble outer limit seems to be the sound of the exotic "other" (chants of New Guinea, etc). What ghosts are being resurrected in the 36 minutes of the seven sound worlds of this single? The "techno-pagan" (as David Toop has called it) acts as the astrobat, the boost which lifts techno into a gravity-less state.

JAM AND SPOON TALES FROM A DANCEOGRAPHIC OCEAN 12" EP (R&S/Outer Rhythm RSUK 14). With its title, it performs a cheeky resurrection/recirculation of Yes and their legacy. In fact, the three tracks on this EP map out an audio Real which has nothing to do with Yes at all. It's still funny, though. "My First Fantastic F.F." is especially interesting for its use of the EEG pulse, which it drops over a weightless open surround of synth as if the hollows of the inner body were as limitless as space itself. "Stella", a pretty glissando of a swoon has been remixed again by Moby and Jam and Spoon themselves. Moby brings the suburban sublime of "Go" (his hit single based on the opening bars of the *Twin Peaks* theme tune) to bear on the tune. Jam and Spoon go via the "techno-pagan", dropping in snatches of Amazon Indian type chants into the environment. Is the pagan already futuristic?

IRRESISTIBLE FORCE THE UNDERGROUND EP (*Rising High* pre). For Mixmaster Morris, only space is the place which paradoxically signifies an outer limit. "Flow Motion" is the "ambient" track, bearing in mind that "ambient" like "techno" and "house" don't really refer to any specific genre these days. Still, "Flow Motion" is beautiful. More EEG pulse – the sound of sound gone liquid, gone visual, ultra-emerald light which hips and hops as it echo-answers the signals it receives from the bodies answering contours. Liquid silence; the gentle blinking of unknown planets.

APHEX TWIN DIDGERIDOO (R&S/Outer Rhythm RSUK 12). Twenty-year-old Richard James, who produced this EP, has been touted as a genius (a resurrection-effect term if I ever heard one). Like "Flow Motion", "Analogue Bubblebath" is liquid liquid, this time with a cosmic Mid-West country twang

last heard on Eno's *Apollo* LP. It's like the soundtrack's the moment in an advert when some heavy object starts to rise into the orbit. "Didgeridoo" takes a derided (because trivialised) "exotic" instrument and lifts off into the audiosphere with it. Nothing unusual here except that the Aphex Twin stays with the drone, rides out the monotone until it starts to be scary, dangerous, way in excess of its former status. No wonder only Rolf Harris can be trusted with such music.

THE SANDALS PROFOUND FUNK (*Open To JAZZ ID 4TT*). Gas in the "beatnik" sense, meaning joke, put on, spoken after a hilarious thing has happened. Five mixes: the Profound Dud extracts the extraneous and leaves alarm clocks, whistles, vibes, and cavernous silences to stretch out like a 90s cartoon version of the opening of the Art Ensemble's *People in Sorrow*. A crossover between a hairy, "groovy" multi-racial vibe and the smooth, polished production style of Leftfield.

GALLIANO SKUNK FUNK (*Talking Loud* pre). This is by far the best thing they've ever done. Growling buried, hairy vocals chanting "Skunk Funk . . . in our bones". Funny and far away call and response chanting, continuous crescendo, blowing, moaning horns somewhere in the legacy of Archie Shepp's "Attica Blues" and Doctor John's "Walk on Gilded Splinters". Murky, messy and anthemic.

CHEZ DAMIER CAN YOU FEEL IT (*KMSRecords* KMSUK 3). Paradise retooled and refitted. Devotional techno from the man who sings on Inner City's new single "Pennies From Heaven", and the Reese Project's "Direct Me", both Kevin Saunderson projects. The Detroit Three – Saunderson, Juan Atkins, Derrick May – were and are interested in the connections between emotions and circuitry, in producing an electricity of different empathies: hardly the deep freeze Palladians their enemies and friends took them for, Saunderson least of all. Bodes well for the soon come soul-on-ice fission of Inner City's third album *Prairie*.

BLACK BEATS DUBWISE EP (*Warrior Dance WAF T 24*). Four tracks from the Addis Ababa studio who released the epochal "No Smoke" by Koro Koro a few years back. "Madam E" by The Land of Plenty (aka Kid Batchelor) is a whispered threat just out of earshot – all you hear is the fadeout of



particularly lustrous on "Autumn Leaves". The cover amusingly demonstrates why Webster was nicknamed "Frog".

For sultry late-night listening this music cannot be beat. Perfect. BEN WATSON

clublicks

Kodwo Eshun trips the sound fantastic

FUTURE SOUND OF LONDON - PAPAUA NEW GUINEA JUMPIN' AND PUMPIN' 12" EP (12 TOT 17R). Heliocentric effect: rising spirals of analogue synth, cascades of keyboard runs, the rings of Saturn, a female impersonation of the Siren from outer space – you know the sort of thing. Three years ago, one half of F.S.O.L. was called Skalder, an awkward cyberpunk desperately hoping to

manera. William Gibson (in *Mama Lisa Overdrive*) used the figures of the Horsemen of the Voodoo in an attempt to counteract the notion of cyberspace as a "virgin" territory; he makes "Dub" in that book a devotional technology which can somehow access the cyberspirit world. "Dubwise" by No Smoke and "Money" by the Masai Warriors deal with this idea by remaining indifferent to it, setting out a series of less ambitious and more successful resonances.

fast licks

Mike Atherton gobbles up the grit.

WALTER JACKSON *It's Cool* (Charly CD 305). Underrated soul balladeer Jackson's creamy tones scored him numerous minor hits with black American audiences, but he never became a household name. Here, drawn from his recordings from 1976 until his premature death seven years later, are 15 reasons why. His stylish and sensitive singing and Carl Davis' lush arrangements on such ballads as "It's Cool" and "When The Love Goes Out Of The Loving" ooze class but lack the immediacy of which major hits are made. But anyone who could transform Morris Albert's appalling "Feelings" into a convincing soul ballad had a whole heap of talent.

TITUS TURNER *Sound Off* (Bear Family BCD 15532). One of the first successful black songwriters ("All Around The World", "Leave My Kitten Alone" and The Clovers' "Hey Doll Baby" are his), the resoundingly-named singer didn't have as much success with his own recordings despite prolific waxings in the 50s and 60s. This CD calls all 25 of his recordings for Jamie in 1961: they show an authoritative, rather jolly voice hampered by some dreadfully trite, chirpy pop arrangements and hackneyed songs. Titus is fine on dance songs like "Never Never Nothin'" or "Pony Train", but who needs another version of "Gloria Of Love" or a twist-beat "Sweet Georgia Brown"? If you do, this is for you.

GREG PICCOLO *Heavy Juice* (Demon FIENDCD 202). Roomful Of Blues tenor player Piccolo steps into the limelight for his solo album. His repertoire includes some of his idols' numbers, like Red Prysock's "The Hammer", and his playing has the hook and

the greasiness of a Prysock or a Jay McNeely. The backing band comprises Roomfuls past and present (Duke Robillard, Al Copley, etc.) and thus is nothing but fine. Piccolo would probably agree that his singing is not the greatest talent the Lord gave him, but his instrument cuts, such as the saucy romp through "Big Boss Man", are a treat.

JAMES PETERSON *Too Many Knots* (Ichiban ICH 1130). The success of young blues multi-instrumentalist Lucky Peterson seems to be reflecting back on to his old dad James. Here's Peterson *five's* follow-up to last year's "Rough And Ready", and again it juxtaposes his hollered, down-home singing with a more modern, funky-blues band, with a touch of rock in the guitar work. James' blues deal largely with complex relationships, as on "Call Before You Come Home", and he's adept at taking old titles and fitting new songs to them: "Every Good-bye Ain't Gone" isn't the G.L. Crockett blues, for example. Organist Lucky adds vivid splashes to the sound, but overall the singer is better than the accompaniment.

VARIOUS ARTISTS *The Chiswick Story* (Chiswick CDWIK 2-100). The independent Chiswick label was born in 1975, flourished in the late 70s and early 80s and was wound down in the face of changing musical tastes in 1984. As label manager Roger Armstrong relates in his absorbing and hilarious booklet notes, the idea behind Chiswick was to record and issue "a good tune with a decent arrangement, played with a bit of fire" - an approach which brought the label some commercial success and great artistic impact, as this 50-track retrospective shows. The music ranges from the revivalist rock'n'roll of Rocky Sharpe through the punk of Johnny Moped to the metal of Motherhead, and that fire burns on nearly every track, though good tunes are in shorter supply. This is a definitive look at the indie scene of its time, with brave new bands on the way up, one-shotters whose fire flared but briefly, and occasional famous names (Phil Lynott, Wailin' Howie Casey) cropping up on the sidelines.

BLUE RHYTHM BOYS *At Last* (Big Beat CDWIK 105). These lads had a number one indie EP a while ago and now, only a decade later, here's the album. The wait has been worthwhile, for this five-piece combo succeeded in being well-drilled and exciting at the same time. They essay a variety of styles from Chicago blues to cajun via James Brown's

"I'll Go Crazy", but their straight-ahead rock'n'roll and rockabilly numbers such as "Ride And Roll" or their own "Come On Back" are the most successful thanks to Paul Carlisle's convinced and convincing vocals, Jim Carlisle's clean and spiky lead guitar and Nick Gilroy's pulsating upright bass. No one tries too hard, thus adding to the 50s authenticity of the sound.

MUDDY WATERS BAND *Mud In Your Ear* (Vogue 600630). Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark? This 1967 recording contains an hour or so of the Muddy Waters Band, but very little of the man himself. Waters, on this occasion, is content to sit back and play rhythm guitar, when he's there at all, while his sidemen step up front. The "sidemen" are Sammy Lawhorn, Georgia Boy Johnson, Otis Spann, Mojo Buford and Fran-



cy Clay, and needless to say they lay down electric Chicago blues as gritty and exhilarating as most. The distinctive deep-country voice of Muddy is lacking, but Johnson's restifying tones on numbers like "Digging My Potatoes" and Buford's more amiable offerings like the infectious "Mini Dress" are some compensation. The Mud may be little in evidence, but the earth's there all right.

ROOT BOY SLIM *Root 6* (Ichiban NAK 002). How "Root Boy Slim" Mackenzie has sustained his career through half a dozen albums is something of a mystery, but he even boasts a fan club in his native Danville, California, so someone must like him. "Direct from the millet - Root Boy Slim," says a spoken intro, after which the snar growls, mumbles and slimes - rarely "sings" - his way through ten off-the-wall titles, backed by a heavy blues-rock combo based on members of load 70s

A complete collection of back issues of *The Wire* is a prized archive indeed: with many issues out of print and many more now very low in our back issue store room, now is definitely the time to fill in gaps before many key issues are gone forever into private collections.

RARE & FINE

The following are still available
(* Indicates
very few copies remain):

*1 **Steve Lacy**, Eric Dolphy, Harold Land, Ron Blake, John Stevens, Max Roach

12 **Afro Jazz**, Lorraine Anderson, Chris McGregor, Phil Minton & Roger Turner

13 **Sonny Rollins**, Tommy Chase, Jayce Carter, Bobby McFerrin, Stanley Jordan, Bernard Taverne, Joe Farrell

19 **Ornette Coleman**, Charlie Haden, Steve Lacy, Slim Gaillard, Jazz Cartoon

20 **Art Blakey**, Hank Mobley, Gamelin Trio, Bobby Watson, Wynton & Branford Marsalis

21 **Chet Baker**, Piusi Zou, Jamaaladeen Tacuma, Claude Valdes & Arturo Sandoval, Phil Wainman, Michael Nymon, Naoki Erigun

22 **John Coltrane**, James Blood Ulmer, The Giant Stars, Ralston Blakely, Nathan Davis

23 **Bill Laswell**, Louie Tate, Calix Cruz, Anita O'Day, Alan Bash, Arts London

24 **Betty Carter**, Jimmy Smith, Paul Bley, John Abernathy, Susan Baker, Maggie Nishi, Venezia Art Orchestra

*25 **Courtney Pine**, Paul Motian, George Coleman, Luciano Berni, Gerry Mulligan

*26 **Chico Freeman**, Alex von Schlippenbach, Eddie Harris

27 **Django Bates**, Dewey Redman, Tony Oxley, Dismund Galois, Weather Report

33 **Sonny Rollins**, Dave Breakey, The Beat, John Russell

34/35 **Lester Bowie**, Branford Marsalis, Dexter Gordon, Serge Chaboff, Louie Tate, Paul Lytton & Paul Levens, Frank Zappa

36 **Steve Williamson**, Phillip Best, Bill Fennell, Art Farmer, Tashkent Kirov

37 **Bobby McFerrin**, Hampton Hawes, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, John Linn

38 **Wynton Marsalis**, Wayne Shorter, Nigel Kennedy

39 **Andy Sheppard**, Gil Evans, Sheila Jordan, Todd Danvers

40 **Ornette Coleman**, Charlie Haden, Charlie Rouse, Robert Ashby

41 **Theonious Monk**, Steve Coleman, Steve Swallow, Krasna, Tommy Scott

42 **Horace Silver**, Bud Shank, Xero Slagby, Barney Wilen

43 **Pat Metheny**, Robert Johnson, Albert Collins, Charlie Mariano, Icky Fingers

44/47 **Courtney Pine**, Cecil Taylor, Roland Kirk, Mike & Kate Westbrook, Box Baderbach, Bob Gonsky

48 **Joe Henderson**, King Oliver, Wayne Marsh, Herman Leonard, Harold Budd, Dan Lohman

*49 **Julius Hemphill**, Frank Morgan & Mike Stern, Billy Jenkins, Clark Tracy, Akash Kabir

*50 **Dave Holland**, Tommy Smith, 50 Players, Italian Jazz

51 **Marilyn Crispell**, Andy Kirk, Roland Popp, Gil Evans, Dariusz Richmond, Caspar Bruckmann

52 **Sonny Rollins**, Ed Blackwell, Hawk Roberts, Martin Archer, Ornette Coleman

53 **John Scofield**, Chet Baker, John McLaughlin, Johnny Huges, Von Freeman, Elliott Sharp

54 **Jason Rebello**, Jimmy Rowles, Bob Stewart, Deftones, Adalberto Hall

55 **Dave Sanborn**, Booker Little, John Linn, Lenny Kravitz, Lou Gare

56 **Composers**, Carla Bley, John Cage, Misha Mengelberg, Judith Weir, Mike Gibbs

57 **Bird**, Billy Bang, Devaux Gonsky, Charles McPherson, Rod Roddy

*60 **Andy Sheppard**, Jack DeJohnette, Lancel Hampton, Odeline de la Mariniere

*62 **Paul Reid**, Henry Threadgill, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Jack McLean, Sergey Koryakos, Nina Mac McKenney

*63 **Duke Ellington**, Billy Strayhorn, Batsi Morris, Orphy Robinson, Harry Connick, Roy Eldridge

65 **Bill Frisell**, Anthony Braxton, Jimmy McGriff, Bobby Hackett, John Harris

66 **Chet Baker**, Peter King, Coleman Hawkins, Bob Berg, Shaka Kame

69 **Courtney Pine & Iain Ballamy**, Wilton Brook, Benny Bailey, Dan Barrett

70/71 **20th Street Saxophone Quartet**, Cassandra Wilson, Marcus Smiley Smith, Les Kinnite, Michael Nymon, Bobby Bradford, John Ros Callentine, Essential Athens Of The 80s, British Jazz Supplement

*75 **Roadside Picnic**, Mingus On Record - 1, John Stridfield & Joe Louano, Annette Pinck, Peter Maxwell Davies, Michel Petrucci, Andy Sheppard Big Band

76 **John Surman**, Jazz Warriors, Dexter Gordon, Shabazz, Krzysztof Penderecki, Mingus On Record - 2, Tommy Smith

77 **McCoy Tyner**, Mary Lou Williams, Kevyn Borso, Nicotinson, Chris McGregor, Carol Kidd

78 **Sun Ra**, Frank Smartha, Joe Hazzell, Eugene Chadbourne, Vinny Golia, Dado Paskovane

79 **Jimi Hendrix**, Don Cherry, Ray Anderson, Pat We Russell, Fred Wesley

80 **Bebop**, Miles On Record - 1, Louis Slavey, Scott Hamilton, Eric

81 **Andy Summers**, Steve Coleman, Art Blakey, Miles On Record - 2, Joe Zawvald, Jason Rebello

*82/83 **Quincy Jones**, Cecil Taylor, Ralph Peterson, John Gilmore, Miles On Record - 3, Shok Haines & Wolfman, Film Music

*84 **European Jazz**, Eberhard Weber, Django Reinhardt, FMP, Pierre Boulez

*85 **Louis Maholo**, Evan Parker, Steve Reich, Buster Williams, Doni Charles Parker, Jon Gas

86 **John Coltrane**, Jon Mitchell, Herb Albert, Chicago, Mariya Crispell, Dock Heckstall-Smith

88 **Michael Jackson**, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ebu Castell, Abdallah Ibrahim, David Byrne, John Coltrane

89 **John Lee Hooker**, Kraftwerk, Michael Brecher, Igor Stravinsky, Greg Osby, Natalie Cole

90 **Prince**, Frank Zappa, David Sanborn, Elliott Carter, Barbara Dennerlein

91 **Philip Glass**, Frank Zappa, Willem Houten, Clifford Jordan, Julian Joseph, Sergio Prokhorov

92 **Van Morrison**, Tin Machine, Dave Barrill, Geoff Kizer, Joseph Haydn, Lene Riedbo

93 **Punk celebration**, Jak Wobke, Eric Dolphy, Punkjazz, Bushy Guy, The Gorbals, W.R.

94/95 **Great Black Music**, Wynton Marsalis, Lani Armstrong, Motown, Ice Cube & Public Enemy, Madge Miller, Arkar Bilal, Tay Mahal

97 **Laurie Anderson**, Billie Holiday, Diamonds Galat, My Bloody Valentine, Venezia Macknow

98 **Giorgio Moroder**, Badly Rich, Rashad Ali, Victor Lusti, Thelma Lopez, Alvin Bae (+ free CD!)

99 **Life after the music industry**, Randy Weston, Sheila Jordan, Fabulous, Louisa Naveau, Collective, Bikos Makiels, Gaven Friday, John Lloyd Walker

100 **100 Best Records**, Unisex Heros, Steve Lacy, David Sanborn, Kevin Eubanks, Gaudi to Metal

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Here's what you have to do: fill in the subscription form you'll find slipped into this issue. Write the title of your chosen CD somewhere on the form, clearly and boldly. Send it, with cheque or credit card number to taste, to **THE WIRE**, Namara House, 45/46 Poland Street, London W1V 3DF, and your CD will wing its way to you (but please be patient – they don't always arrive before your first copy of *The Wire*!).

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WANTED 'Musics' #1-7, 11, 12 & 15; 'The Provenances' LP (or tape); tapes of 'Third Ear' (BBC Radio 3) 4/4/88 (last Hamilton Fimley) & 12/1/89 (Gavin Bryars); (video) tapes of the Max Eastley (Channel 4), Robert Wilson (BBC2) & Pitt-Rivers Museum (BBC 2?) documentaries transmitted before I could afford a VCR; J.P. Martyn's 'Uncle's' books (except 'Uncle'); 78s (or whatever) by the Stargazers. Pete Craig, 37 Tebbrooke Avenue, Harlepool. Cleveland TS25 5JF.

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WHISPER NOT Ella Fitzgerald Wanted in good condition Call Angela 071-837 6486.

CDs WANTED: "Four Corners" by the Yellowjackets, "Literary Of Lament" by the Morgan Sheppard Project and "Now He Sings, Now He Sobs" by Chick Corea.

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WANTED Charles Mingus – Black Saint And The Sinner Lady.
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The Last Poets – Hustler Convention.
Please contact Russell Hodges on (081) 983 0382 (eve).

WANTED: David Murray Chamber Jazz Quartet – "The People's Choice" (CEGMA 1009) LP. Alan Hewitt 82 Pictou Road, Aberystwyth, Pentybol, Gwent. 0495 772 629

WANTED WIRE 2 'Rich-Super Drummer' by Balliett. LP Rich-Poland No PJS/Z-5X-0643 F. Truman, Flat 2, 35 St Andrews Rd, Exmouth, EX8 1AR

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C L A S S I F I E D

C L A S S I F I E D

OUT OF SPACE – The shelves are buckling and the walls are threatening to collapse. Something has to go!!!! Albums, EPs, 78s, books, magazines, etc. Jazz, blues, R&B, soul & more. From Kid Ory to Ornette Coleman, Cootie Williams to Todd Dameron, Howlin' Wolf to Dave Bartholomew, Eddie Palmieri to Dembo Conte, Bobby Marchan to Bobby Womack, it's all there!!! Rareties and goodies to save your soul and restore some balance to the no system of my house. A stamped, addressed envelope to Dave Hatfield, 5 Caninton Avenue, Leeds LS6 2BD could just save my life.

NO REASONABLE OFFER refused for complete run (issues 1 to 98) of "The Wire" in good, clean condition. Jim Allen, 48 Ambrose Road, Tadley, Hants. RG26 6JS

STEREO WANTED: Tuner, amp, turntable, cassette deck and CD player. Cash waiting. Call Roy on 071 439 6422

FOR SALE: WIRE issues 1–20 complete; CODA, 19 issues between 133 (Nov. 1974) and 160 (April 1978). Also some other jazz titles, Jazz and Blues, Blues Unlimited, some books, records and CDs. See for more details or with offers for Wires/Codas. **WANTED:** **FOOTNOTE** magazines and CDs of all sorts of music, from New Orleans to contemporary jazz, and other exotic music. 37, Church Drive, Carrington, Nottingham NG5 2AS. Tel. (0602) 625590

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EXCELLENT CONDITION jazz and rock CDs, cassettes, LPs for sale. Send see for list to Box 1961, c/o The Wire.

WANTED: Good condition back issues of The Wire, Nos. 29, 44, 58/59, 61, 64. State asking price to N. Hussey, The Haven, Major's Barn, Chislehurst, Staffs. ST10 1PY

WANTED: Paul Motian on Broadway, Vol 1 (CD). Keith Gardiner, 8 Miles Well Court, The Arbours, Northampton NN3 3RB

WANTED: Eno – "My Squelchy Life" (advance tape) – Kaaras, 25 Springhall Close, Shelf, Halifax HX3 7NB

OPPORTUNITY FOR FREE IMPROVISORS

"AWARE" – 15 strong free music cooperative working along the lines of 'Company', Chicago Art Ensemble and recently 'Sergei Karyobkin's Pop Mechanics' – based in South Lincs, welcomes interested free musicians, singers and performers. We already have musicians from Lincs, Notts, Cambs, Norfolk and Humberside with us. If you've been excited by the Channel 4 Russian new music series . . . we've been at it in rural Lincs for 10 years! . . . Join us! Details – ring Brian Parsons on Bourne (0778) 440396

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JAZZ AND SOUL ALBUMS WANTED in mint or near-mint condition. Including: Dave Bailey, Retching Out (Jazztime JT 0033); Arnett Cobb, Movin' Right Along (Prestige 7216); Nathan Davis, Happy Girl (Saba SB 150253); Paul Gonsalves, Boom-Jackie-Boom-Chick (Vacation LAE 587); Jackie McLean, Hipnosis (Japanese Blue Note GXF 3022); Lou Morgan, The Procrastinator Vol 2 (Japanese Blue Note GXF 3024); Sal Nistico, Heavyweights (Jazzland 66); Sahib Shihab, Seeds (Vogue or Youngblood); John Surman, John Surman (Deram SMR 1030); James Carr, At The Dark End Of The Street (Gold Wax), plus any more Carr on Gold Wax; Oscar Toney Jr, all Bell albums; Jimmy Hughes, Why Not Tonight? (Azo 33-209); Irma Thomas, all albums on Imperial, Minut and Chess; Archibut Conley, Sweet Soul Music (Azo 33-215); Joe Tex, Buying A Book (Atlantic 8231); Aretha Franklin, early Atlantic; all good soul albums on Gold Wax, Fame, Stax or SSB considered. Good prices paid! A. Penn, c/o Box 300, The Wire.

HOUSE OF JAZZ! Accommodation available for non-smoking veg/vegetarian in two bedroom cottage. Very pleasant location, Gorrards Cross, near A40 and rail, London 40 mins. Call Matt 0753 880031

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WIRE BACK ISSUES FOR SALE: preferably as one lot: Nos. 15, 16, 25–53 incl, 55, 57, 58/59 and 64. Contact Kevin Murnay, Daytime 071 274 6935, evenings 081 671 8618

"WHERE IS the artistry in competence?" – Billy Jenkins.

C L A S S I F I E D

C L A S S I F I E D

WANTED in excellent condition. Mike Osborne, 'Outback'; Alan Skidmore, 'TCB'; Terji Rydval, 'Black House'; Mike Westbrook, 'Tyger'; NDR Jazz Workshop, '1969-1971'; Esquivel All Stars, 'C'Est Tout'; Albert Mangelsdorff, 'Room 1220'; Sarason/Westbrook, any tapes or programmes. M Jackson, 35 Langton Road, London NW2 6QF.

WASHBURN ACOUSTIC GUITAR: as new, has had full set up at Andy's costing £50.00, plus soft case, six books, capo, Korg GT-60X tuner, detachable pick-up plus other assorted accessories. A giveaway at £85.00 the lot. Also flute music all in mint condition, some unused, some hardly used, nearly £80.00 worth. Includes full set of treble Wye practice books, Harold's eleven sonatas, plus lots more. Only £35.00 the lot. Tel: 0708 767063

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JAZZ COLLECTIONS BOUGHT - large or small, I'm interested. I pay more, and I can collect. Check me out! Mike Fish (yes, that one) (no, not the weather guy) c/o Box 765, The Wire.

WANTED! I STILL NEED lots of free jazz/improv records to fill unlitigly gaps on my shelves. Like: Van Hee, Requiem For Cbe (MPS), Lake, Orange Fish Tears (Palm); Breaker, De Boodichap (ICP); plenty of others, rare stuff by Ra, Lacy etc. Thanks to those who answered my last ad. Good prices waiting, or I'll trade or tape. Worth it! Contact: Alfredo, Box 2345, c/o The Wire.

WANTED In mint or near-mint condition: Hank Mobley All Stars (Blue Note BLP 1544), Michael Garrick, Poetry And Jazz Vol 1 (Argo DA 26) and Argo DA 36, Bill Collins, 35 Korman Park, Portadown, Co Armagh, N Ireland.

"THERE IS a fine line between 'respect' for one's forefathers' music and profiteering from nostalgia" - Billy Jenkins.

'STOLEN REFRAIN; for a friend', a new poem in 21 polyps. Now available from the author, each copy individually screen and signed. "Alone with friends you answer my trust/Like a photograph of a dead horse, blatant." Price £5.00 from: Richard Bellinger, 23 Jenkin Street, Bidgend, Mid Glamorgan CF31 3AN.

SPRING CLEANING has unearthed these late 1970s magazines covering jazz/improvised music: IMPETUS issues 1-9, MUSICS issues 11, 13-23 (February 1977-November 1979), CONTACT issues 12-21 (Autumn 1975-Autumn 1980). Also BLUES UNLIMITED issues 81-95 (April 1971-October 1972). Will accept £2.00 per issue. Contact Duncan on 081-840 7541.

WANTED: Eno - *My Squelchy Life: Advance Tape*, Kaarna, 25 Springhall Close, Halifax HX3 7NE

PHILIP GLASS: Michael Nyman etc recordings wanted. Tapes, videos etc. Trade or buy. Please send details to Karl Phillips, 9 Russell Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7XD

FREE ADS!

Desperate for a way to get rid of your old Mungo Jerry albums? Want to find a replacement mouthpiece for that antique contrabass saxophone? Or maybe you're just missing that elusive last item which will complete your collection of Chicory Tip memorabilia. Well, fret no more! For an extremely limited period, The Wire is offering its readers one free private classified ad up to a maximum of 100 words. Yes, that's right, a free advert, no strings attached, gratis. Just send your ad to the usual address and remember, no more than 100 words. Sorry, but this offer does not apply to trade advertisers (you still have to pay through the nose).

Copy for Free Ads must be typed and supplied by fax or post to Wire Magazine, Free Classifieds Offer, Namana House, 45-46 Poland Street, London W1A.

Copy deadline, first day of the month prior to publication

Please note: we prefer not to mention other music titles by name.

C L A S S I F I E D

SOUNDHECK continued from page 67

band Foghat. His subject matter is distasteful, studiously so, including over-indulgence in junk food on "Burger Row", unwanted pregnancy on "Our Little Mistake" and unusual auto theft in "Big Yellow Streetsweeper". Offbeat, often appalling, but oddly appealing.

TINSLEY ELLIS & THE HEARTFIXERS COOL

ON IT (*Alligator ALCD 3905*). Ellis, now with Alligator, cut this album in 1986 on a local label when he was still an unknown white blues and boogie merchant from down Georgia way. The ten-track programme shows his potential: his throatily impassioned singing and bawdy clangorous guitar imparts on blues-based rockers like "Drivin' Women". But the band's weaknesses are shown up: they twin the leader's efforts on a fun slice of rockabilly called "Hong Kong Mississippi" by adopting an overly heavy-handed approach. Still, Ellis' choice of material is refreshing, not only Chuck Berry ("Tulane") but also Elmore James, Leo Kottke and The Rockin' Rebels receive the Ellis treatment on this beefy and largely satisfying set.



CHRIS MONTEZ THE MONOGRAM SIDES (*Ace CDCH 347*). A young Montez looks well cheered off on the front cover of this CD, perhaps he has just had to listen to all 20 tracks. Sure, the young Chicano's "Let's Dance" was one of the freshest and most exciting beat records of 1962 and a deserved international smash, but the formula soon palled, despite the crisp little L.A. backing combo and despite, or perhaps because of, several duets with a singer named Kathy

whose voice makes a pancake look like the Peak District. Montez's light voice is limited to its appeal, though producer Jim Lee throws in every gimmick he knows to try and bolster interest: special guest appearances by the "Raunchy" rhythm on "Shoot That Curl" and most of the "Twist & Shout" song on "My Baby Loves To Dance". Really, the best of Chris Montez is a single.

VARIOUS ARTISTS RADIO GOLD (*Ace*

CDCHD 347). Now here's an object lesson in compiling an oldies album: 30 tracks and 75 minutes ranging across the oldies spectrum from rock'n'roll through 60s pop to doo-wop. Your local Old Gold station may well programme "Wake Up Little Sue", "Runaround Sue", "Twist And Shout" and "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow", but you're lucky if they're enlightened enough to include such minor classics as The Chordettes' forthright "Mr Sandman", The Skyliners' doo-wopper "Since I Don't Have You", The Four Pennies' sub-Spector "When The Boy's Happy" or Paul Evans' novel slant on the death-crash theme "Hello This Is Joanie". Attractively packaged and brimful of good old tunes; more, please.

WALDRON continued from page 23

died classical piano as a child, but didn't embrace jazz until he was in his early 20s.

"I didn't want to be a classical pianist. My parents wanted me to be. I didn't like practising because I never could play anything over and over the same way. My teachers used to accuse me of messing up the classics when I would try a little variation."

He was lured into jazz by a chance hearing of Coleman Hawkins' "Body And Soul." "I couldn't afford a tenor saxophone like he played, so I tried to play his solo on that song, which had been transcribed in *Dawn Beat*, on an alto saxophone, with a hard reed and a big open lay on the mouthpiece.

He switched back to piano because "saxophone wasn't my instrument. It demands an outgoing personality, and I was a very shy and introverted young man. With an upright piano, you feel protected because the lid hovers over you and hides you. It allows me to retreat into the background, where I felt comfortable, and my technique was OK, thanks to those early lessons."

In 1963, Waldron suffered a nervous breakdown that resulted in temporary amnesia. He regained his memory, but not his pianistic technique. "I had to begin again from scratch. For a long time, my hands would shake so badly when I played that I couldn't trust myself to keep good time or to remember

chord changes to my tunes. I had to memorize some of my old solos off records so that I could at least earn a buck in clubs while I was getting myself back together."

In listening to those pre-breakdown records now, does Waldron hear a difference from his current style? "A big difference, yes. I was more lyrical then, more relaxed and flowing. My lines are much more angular now, more stabbing, more percussive."

Would the music he's playing now be different, then, if not for his emotional problems, and if not for his decision to live abroad?

"How can anyone say?"

Does he think of his style of jazz as "obsessive?"

"Economical, maybe, like Monk's. My father was a mechanical engineer, one of the first blacks hired to do that job for the Long Island Railroad. When the depression came, we were fine. We weren't in the streets selling apples like everybody else. But I was taught, like Monk was, to put everything to use, to never throw anything away. It left me with a sense of thrift that's carried over to my music. Don't use ten notes if you can say it with three.

"But obsessive? I don't know. That's a word that a critic used, writing about my music. I don't think about it. I just play."

Sure.

KEEP WARM THIS WINTER: MAKE TROUBLE

I ENJOYED Mark Sinker's piece on Troublemakers in May's *The Wire*, also the headline WHY WE MUST DESTROY THE MUSIC INDUSTRY. But tell me, is the announcement that Richard Cook is to leave to become a record industry A&R man merely a coincidence — has he some sort of hidden agenda, or has he simply sold out to the enemy? I'd love to know

JAMES NYE, Isle of Wight.

POWERFUL ARGUMENT, POOR EXAMPLE

I WOULDN'T have taken my pen once more to say how disappointed I am concerning the "new aperture" to "other musics" of your magazine, if I hadn't seen written incredibly stupid answers to subscribers and readers complaining this way. There is only one thing I want to add to this, and I know that you won't have any courage enough to put my letter (written in very lousy English, but with a real enthusiasm for intelligent music!), it's that without accepting with intelligence that this aperture has only to see with a very obscure business to such a wider public, you lose more than your faithful readers, your more creative critics; but putting Whitney Houston close to Robert Wyatt, and saying "it's normal, it's music" you also lose your pride. I hope it's not too long before things change. Byebye! Love for Biba Kopf!

T. CALLOIX, Paris.

Robert Wyatt recorded *The Monks* "I'm A Believer" in the mid-70s; Chris's "At Last I Am Free" in the early 80s. We can pretend this was a "joke" — or we can take Wyatt at his word — that

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they were great songs. Phil McNell's *Whitney piece* detailed how the industry had trapped a great singer into recording inadequate and unstable material: seems to me *The Wire's* job to run such opinions. Who else is going to? — Ed.

RETURN OF THE FIFTH DIMENSION

I WOULD like to add my own comments to Max Harrison's review of the Kronos Quartet. The significant factor is the use of a conventional pan-European structure approaching the cosmic universality of the African existential whole. Coming from a culture which is based on a Germanic time structure from a dimension different to that of Africans, the Kronos Quartet are playing in a dimension entirely removed from the reality which one would expect them to be used to.

I hope this is clear. These are important points and I am contributing them from an African perspective.

KWALE ONOMDIRIS, London.

DISTURB NOT THESE MORTAL REMAINS

I REFUSE to let the matter rest! The snades asides you inserted into Martin Williams' letter re *The Grateful Dead* back in the April issue were either needlessly sarcastic or factually incorrect for a lighthearted joke?

Heavyhearted Ed). And now the defence of the Dead I submitted for inclusion in *The Write Place* seems to have been ignored altogether. [It was about 1300 pages long.]

Richard Cook has elsewhere expressed an admiration for the band; frequent contributor Steve Lake too has written extensively about them in other publications. So how come your overriding prejudice is allowed to hold sway?

To consider Prince's flashy, showbiz clichés as worther of a place in *The Wire* than the Dead's often sublime output is comparable to regarding Bruce Forsyth as a more challenging jazz pianist than Cecil Taylor.

As for your contention in #100 that various German groups and the likes of Cabaret Voltaire were "the first native fruits of [Stockhausen's] true influence": I'm not convinced. Whereas Stockhausen's on the whole tend to be adventurous in all musical parameters, the majority of those "Kraut-rockers" and similar British outfits tended merely to superimpose electronic squeaks and whooshes over mind-numbingly simplistic, repetitive metrical/harmonic patterns. The resulting hypnotic monotony may be very "atmospheric", but profound music it ain't.

By contrast, the Dead's most cogent improvisations are genuinely exploratory, and much more varied aesthetically and emotionally — and, as such, much more deserving of space in the pages of your magazine.

BOB QUARF, London

OK, OK, so the Dead are the transcendent musical experience of the age. I forgot. As it goes, mind-numbing is as mind-numbing does: the use of repetitive patterns has always been cited as the reason most black music isn't as "important" as most white music. It's a weak reason, it all. Your casual characterisation of — specifically — Can, Faust, early Kraftwerk and early Cabaret Voltaire, is, well, "factually incorrect" — and (a Deadheads tie?) you have a tendency towards overstating your case. — Ed.

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